

NEW COLUMNIST NAOMI KLEIN: BIN LADEN AND THE DAMAGE DONE

In These Times

INDEPENDENT NEWS & VIEWS

October 29, 2001

**Are
You
Ready for
the
Long
War?**

**Doug Ireland
Slavoj Žižek
George Lakoff
Susan Douglas
David Moberg
and more...**



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Associate Publisher: Joshua Rothkopf
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Editorial

Say No to War

What would be a sensible way for the United States to respond to the attacks of September 11? Though few signs of sense are to be found in the belligerent Beltway, common sense and human decency provide useful guideposts.

The U.S. response should be based on the proposition that all human life is equally precious. To bomb Afghanistan and kill innocent people to get Osama bin Laden and the Taliban would be immoral. Strategically, it would be folly. Killing civilians in a retaliatory strike would only stoke the ranks of Islamic fundamentalist extremists across the Muslim world. Our allies understand this and have cautioned against such an indiscriminate response.

Further, bombing Afghanistan would truly escalate the September 11 attacks to the level of a war. Absent such bombing, talk of war is nonsense. We don't need a war on terrorism—a war some pundits have morphed into World War III. Going to war may motivate Americans on the home front and unite the country, but it will elicit the same response from those we attack. Indeed, war (did someone say "crusade"?) ratchets up the conflict, turns criminals into warriors (in this case holy ones) and sets the stage for a never ending series of attacks and counterattacks, for death and more death.

The terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon are more properly described as horrendous criminal acts. With such an understanding we could confront bin Laden's al-Qaeda organization as we would domestic terrorists. Of

course, al-Qaeda, with branches in dozens of countries, operates on a worldwide scale. What is needed is a global, unified response to these criminals, and the very real threat they pose, preferably under the umbrella of the United Nations. Such a collective response could deploy the expertise of the world's military, police and intelligence communities and be guided by seasoned world statesmen.

In formulating a united international strategy to stop al-Qaeda, we could learn lessons from how other nations have coped with homegrown terrorism. Britain doesn't bomb areas of Belfast to counter terrorist acts by extremist Republicans and

Unionists. Spain doesn't bomb Bilbao to get ETA, the Basque separatists. Progress in these ongoing campaigns against terrorism has come only when the Spanish and British governments have acknowledged and addressed the legitimate grievances of historically oppressed people—and reined in out-of-control security forces.

Israel also provides us with a textbook case on how to deal with terrorists. Under Yitzhak Rabin, for a time, peace seemed possible despite the ongoing threat of suicide bombers. The policies of the Ariel Sharon government, endorsed by the United States with its silence—policies that include the bombardment of Palestinian neighborhoods—have undone what progress was made. Similarly, we can learn what not to do by examining Russia's brutal suppression of the Chechen rebellion.

Unfortunately, the track record of Bush's foreign policy team, veterans of the war on communism, does not inspire confidence. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld rabidly opposed *détente* with the Soviet Union. The future U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, John Negroponte (his nomination slipped through committee after the attacks), turned a blind eye to state-sponsored death squads trained by the CIA when he was ambassador to Honduras. And Secretary of State Colin Powell (now in the administration's moderate minority) burned

The September 11 terrorist attacks are more properly described as horrendous criminal acts.

Vietnamese peasants out of their huts, "starting the blaze with Rooson and Zippo lighters," as he recalled his autobiography.

In this atmosphere of public apprehension and fear, the terrorist threat, like the communist menace of yore, has given the Bush administration *carte blanche* to do whatever it likes. The war on communism brought with it myriad atrocities—atrocities that moved Congress to put limitations on U.S. intelligence agencies. In this so-called War on Terrorism, those controls are now heading for the bonfire.

In the enveloping darkness, it's time for those of us who doubt the wisdom of such actions to speak out.

Joel Bleifuss

In These Times

Volume 25, Numbers 24 October 29, 2001

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2 Letters

3 News

Handicapping the New York mayoral race, the global justice movement regroupes, a conservative takes New Jersey by surprise, and reports from the U.N. racism conference.

7 Appall-o-Meter By Dave Mulcahey

9 No Logo By Naomi Klein

Bin Laden and the damage done.

Features

10 The Long War

By Doug Ireland

Bush's crusade has no end in sight.

13 Where Have All the Liberals Gone?

By Annette Fuentes

Barbara Lee stands alone.

14 Every Breath You Take

By David Moberg

Will the feds be watching you?

16 Stopping the War

By Geov Parrish

The peace movement returns.

17 Bad Example

By Neve Gordon

Bush is drawing the wrong lessons from Israel.

18 What Goes Around ...

By Jeff Shaw

INTERVIEW: *Blowback* author Chalmers Johnson.

20 Peace Is Indivisible

By Richard Steele

INTERVIEW: Studs Terkel on the American spirit.

21 Metaphors of Terror

By George Lakoff

The power of images.

25 The Desert of the Real

By Slavoj Žižek

Is this the end of the fantasy?

27 Oedipus in Manhattan

By Susan J. Douglas

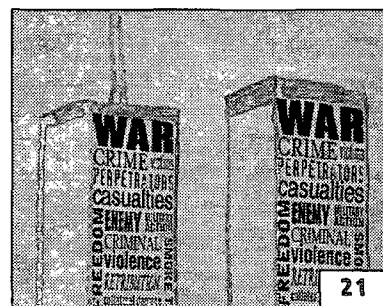
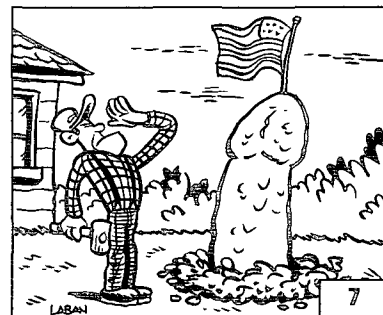
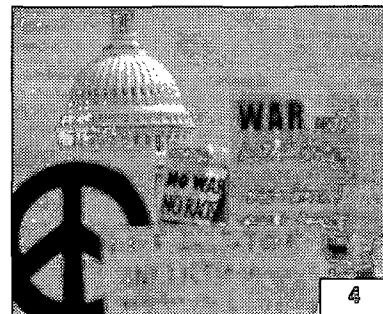
The blind report to the blind.

30 This Mess We're In

By Joshua Klein

Desperate for a reason to smile.

Cover photo: Stephen Shaver/AFP



Hitchens' Innuendo

In "So This Is War?" (October 15), Christopher Hitchens suggests, via insinuation and innuendo, that in essence the United States brought this attack upon itself because the United States is supporting a "racist" Israeli government that has brought untold and undeserved woe upon the innocently suffering peoples of the Middle East—the Palestinians in particular.

That in the Middle East conditions exist in which anti-Semitism, religious fundamentalism and the ethos of *jihad* have melded into a self-defeating and all-encompassing "worldview," has more to do with the reactionary character of the Arab governments and clerisy than it does with either Israel or America's support for the latter. That the nations of the Middle East subsist in poverty and hopeless political impotence is directly attributable to authoritarian political regimes which find it easier to blame their woes on Israel than face up to the complexities and demands of contemporary politics.

By whipping up anti-Israeli sentiment, which nowadays blares from the minarets of almost every mosque, they are employing a classic technique of modern political authoritarianism: identifying an "other" qua political scapegoat to unify the "volk" for bellicose, racist ends. Ensuring that a people are maintained in a state of political immaturity, moreover, is one of the classic techniques employed by authoritarian political regimes to perpetuate their rule. If Hitchens were really concerned with the welfare of Arab peoples, he would address some of these concerns.

Richard Wolin
New York

Sharing the Blame

"A Tinderbox in Palestine" by Charmaine Seitz (October 15) was an interesting article, but surprisingly one-sided. Seitz left out many facts, including that Palestinian celebrations were more widespread than reported, due to the Palestine Authorities intimidation of foreign journalists. The foreign press association has filed complaints about such intimidation.

Seitz also underplays the extent to which the Palestine Authority in its Arabic-language media incites hatred and violence. An impressive recent example was the praise of suicide bombings that was printed in *Al-Hayat Al-Jadida* , the Palestinian Authority's official newspaper, on September 11.

Israel is far from blameless in creating a classically colonial, nasty economic and territorial oppression. But you should give more balanced accounts. There is plenty of insanity to go around on both sides.

Adam Sragovicz
San Diego

Our Choice

Whether many of the U.S. citizens now crying out for retribution know it or not, they are sharing an emotional bond with Palestinian parents who cannot stop crying after their 8-year-old son was killed by rockets fired from a U.S.-supplied Israeli helicopter; a Jewish mother who lies overwhelmed by grief in a hospital bed after seeing her infant daughter killed by an Islamic extremist suicide bomber in Jerusalem; the Nicaraguan teen-ager who watched helplessly as a contra guerrilla fighter financed by Washington raped his sister and slit her throat. This toxic emotion can be found in millions of people across the globe who have experienced the raw and destructive passion that consumes victims of repression and violence.

If we are to make progress as a civilization—or, more critically, survive as a species—we face the stark choice. We must either build a new global culture of compassion or continue to ignore our current system, guided only by market values, that cultivates inequality, militarism and the degradation of human life. Without fundamental change, the forces that see violence as the only method to address

legitimate grievances, symbolized in the carnage of Lower Manhattan and along the Potomac, will inevitably grow and become more destructive.

Scott Harris
Bridgeport, Connecticut

Correction

Jeffrey St. Clair's article "The Case of the Missing H-Bomb" (August 20) left the impression that one of the four atomic bombs that fell to earth following a mid-air collision near Palomares, Spain in 1966 remained unaccounted for. In fact, the missing bomb was recovered 80 days later in 2,850 feet of water off the coast of Portugal. Also, the name of Wassaw Sound was misspelled. Thanks to Stephen Schwartz of *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* for pointing this out. An excellent summary of the Palomares and Thule incidents can be found in the *Atomic Audit Report* now on the Web at the Brookings Institution: www.brook.edu/fp/projects/nucwcst/box7-3.htm.

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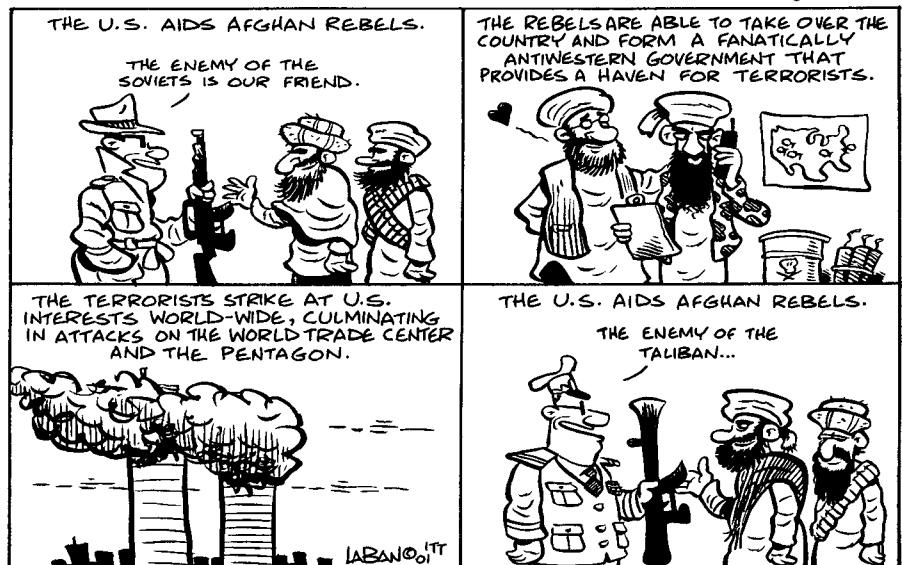
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Terry LaBan



Ready, Freddy?

Ferrer wins NYC mayoral primary but faces a tough runoff against Mark Green

By Doug Ireland

New York City municipal elections are a quadrennial exercise in racial and ethnic politics. And despite the attacks on the World Trade Center—which took place on Primary Day, resulting in the annulment of the election three and a half hours after the polls opened—that truism was again in evidence when the primary was finally held two weeks later.

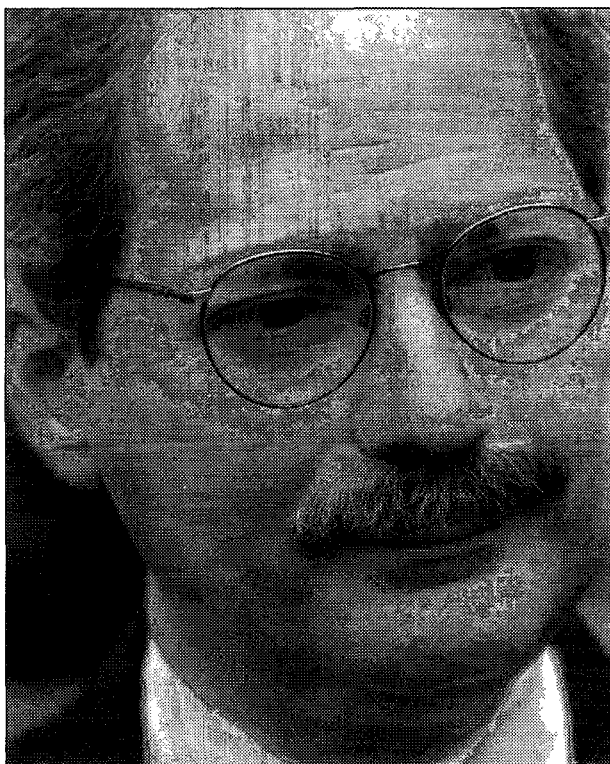
The extraordinary showing by Bronx Borough President Fernando “Freddy” Ferrer—who topped the Democratic field of four mayoral candidates with 35 percent of the vote to Public Advocate Mark Green’s 31 percent—was a testament to the new ethnic reality in the Big Apple, which is now majority non-white.

Ferrer, a Puerto Rican from the city’s mostly Hispanic northernmost borough, had pinned his hopes on creating a viable on-the-ground Black-Hispanic coalition to take advantage of the 2000 Census’ demographic revelations. It worked. Turnout among white voters was driven down by the effects of the terrorist attacks, while Hispanic and black voters came out in droves. Complete returns were not available at press time, but exit polls showed that, for the first time, the Hispanic vote equaled that of blacks: 23 percent of the total.

From the beginning of the year, it was Green—a one-time Nader’s Raider with a liberal reputation—who was the putative front-runner, although there had been little voter interest in the dull race until after Labor Day. But in the final week of campaigning, Ferrer had picked up momentum: He won the endorsement of politically potent

SEIU Health Workers Local 1199, whose huge, mostly black and Hispanic membership forced the union’s boss, Dennis Rivera, to take 1199 into the Ferrer camp.

And when the Rev. Al Sharpton got out of jail after serving three months for protesting U.S. bombing of the Puerto Rican island of Vieques, he endorsed Ferrer, who campaigned arm-in-arm with him in the black community, where Sharpton was greeted as a hero by wildly enthusiastic crowds.



Fernando Ferrer outflanked Mark Green on the left.

Ferrer and Green were neck-and-neck in the opinion polls going into September 11. But in the wake of the Twin Towers disaster, all candidates suspended campaigning for the rescheduled primary—New Yorkers were in mourning in a city in chaos.

Green is now paying for having made the frontrunner’s classic mistake: make no waves. For six months he sat cautiously on his lead and his huge name recognition (he is a former co-host of CNN’s *Crossfire* and adept at getting press coverage). Green tap-danced to the center—opposing parole, for example, and refusing to say, as Ferrer did, that the four cops who riddled an inno-

cent black man, Amadou Diallo, with 41 bullets on his own doorstep, should be kicked off the force. And Green made his endorsement by Bill Bratton, Mayor Rudy Giuliani’s popular first police commissioner, a centerpiece of his campaign, adopting law-and-order-tinged rhetoric to appeal to so-called Giuliani Democrats. Green’s newly minted centrism and his caution drained enthusiasm for him among his traditional progressive base.

At the same time, Ferrer outflanked Green on his left by positioning himself as the “anti-Giuliani,” campaigning as the spokesman for “the other New York,” those left out of the city’s economic boom.

Ferrer, however, is a pure product of Bronx Democratic machine politics who has been all over the lot on issues. When Ferrer ran for mayor four years ago, he campaigned to the right, coming out in favor of the death penalty after having opposed it for years—this year, he favored a “moratorium.”

Furthermore, white turnout was dampened by the antics of “Rudy the Rock” (as French President Chirac dubbed the term-limited mayor), who signaled his availability for another four years if a way could be found to overturn term limits by legislative action. Even though this would have required approval by the state legislature—whose Democratic Speaker, Sheldon Silver, hates Giuliani—would certainly have blocked it, ignorant media hype made a chunk of white voters decide to “wait for Rudy” and stay home.

As Green and Ferrer head toward an October 11 runoff, suddenly it’s a horse race. Ferrer again has momentum—the day after the voting, he picked up the endorsement of the most conservative of the four Democratic mayoral candidates, City Council Speaker Peter Vallone, who got 20 percent of the vote. Ferrer’s problem is that only 7 percent of white voters supported him, according to exit polls, which also showed him losing to Green 51 to 40 percent in the runoff.

SPENCER PLATT/NEWSMAKERS

But Ferrer has a powerful new campaign theme: "I rebuilt the Bronx, I can rebuild New York" after the attacks (even though Ferrer, in reality, had little to do with the Bronx's revival). There's panic in the Green camp; says a top Green strategist, "Mark has to hug and kiss Bill Bratton like they were on their first date and hope whites are frightened enough of Al Sharpton to come out."

But if Green maintains his centrist course, his liberal base may stay home. And Ferrer may pick up the support of the powerful United Federation of Teachers—he's made raising teacher salaries a central issue, and the UFT hates Green.

Green may have committed a major blunder in agreeing to Giuliani's latest maneuver to stay in office. Rudy asked all mayoral candidates to join him in asking the legislature to extend his term until April. Ferrer said no, but Green said yes—making him look even more opportunistic. This could lose him not only some of the 30 percent of the black vote Green got in the primary, but, by making him look weak, also nibble away at the white vote. Term limits were passed twice by the voters, and Rudy's chutzpah in scheming to get around them is dissipating his "hero" image—it looks like a coup, and many resent it.

Rendezvous October 11. ■

Too Peaceful To Play?

In the weeks following the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, a list of about 150 songs were reportedly banned from play on Clear Channel Communications' more than 1,200 stations because they might offend listeners.

But what seemed originally to be censorship turned out to be a case of self-censorship: The list was apparently generated by station programmers without help from the top and then sent throughout Clear Channel's network and the industry, according to *Wired's* Brad King.

Clear Channel quickly denied banning any songs in a statement ("Clear Channel strongly believes in the First Amendment and freedom of speech") but added, "Clear Channel believes that radio is a local medium. Each program director and general manager must take the pulse of his or her market to determine if play lists should be altered, and if so, for how long."

Show Stopper

The global justice movement regroups in the wake of the terrorist attacks

By David Moberg

For months the movement against corporate globalization had been building for what looked like its biggest demonstration in the United States, planned to coincide in late September with the annual meeting of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund in Washington. But the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon led to cancellation of the official meetings and most of the protests, temporarily throwing the growing movement off-course and forcing its leaders to reconsider their near-term strategy.

Calling off the demonstration by what was expected to be nearly 100,000 representatives of labor, environmental, anti-corporate and solidarity movements "represents an interruption and perhaps the end of the momentum that started in Seattle [at the 1999 World Trade Organization protests]," says Soren Ambrose, senior policy analyst of the

Fifty Years Is Enough network. "But the movement will continue. I don't think we'll be thrown back to the pre-1999 situation where, aside from the anti-sweatshop movement, it was hard to get our message out."

After September 11, the AFL-CIO—which had made a major commitment to the IMF protests—turned its energies to support for workers hurt or lost in the attacks and their families. Although the Mobilization for Global Justice, one of the principal coalitions building for the protest, decided to continue a teach-in, its leaders nearly unanimously agreed that "it was not the time" for street protests, especially since "the public isn't in a mood to listen," says Chuck Kaufman, national co-coordinator of the Nicaragua Network.

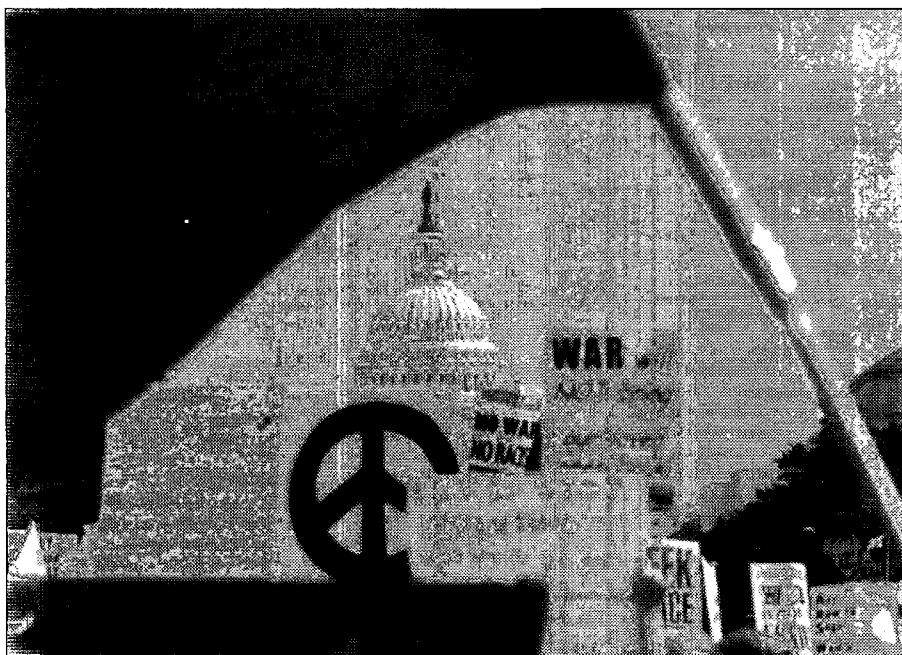
In the days after the attacks, some groups wanted to redirect their protest against war and racism, and two smaller organizations—the International Action Center and a network called the Anti-Capitalist Convergence, which emerged out of last spring's demonstrations in Quebec—decided to pursue scaled-down actions for September 29 that were focused on the threat of war. But many of the groups involved in the original mobilization, which would have called for cancellation of poor countries' debts, widespread distribution of AIDS medications and opposition to "fast track" trade promotion authority for Bush, said they did not have an organizational mandate to shift gears and focus on the prospect of war. Other strategists worried that the public might see a switch as simply opportunistic protest.

There was also no clear agreement across the global justice movement on how the United States should respond to the September 11 attacks. Even among labor unions, there were a range of reactions. While expressing support for the victims, which included many union members, most unions and the AFL-CIO issued statements that emphasized the need to avoid scapegoating Muslims and Arabs in the United States (or, in the case of the Service Employees, attacked Rev. Jerry Falwell's crude effort to blame the attacks on gays, pro-choice advocates and others). Initially only the Machinists union struck a bellicose note, calling for "vengeance, pure and complete," employing the fighter jets its

Clear Channel's stations cover 247 of the 250 largest radio markets in the country and control 60 percent of the rock-listening format alone, while dominating Top 40 radio play. Some of the songs deemed too offensive to play by Clear Channel programmers in the wake of the attacks:

The Bangles, "Walk Like an Egyptian"
James Taylor, "Fire and Rain"
Everything by Rage Against the Machine
The Beatles, "Obla Di, Obla Da"
REM, "It's the End of the World As We Know It"
Kansas, "Dust in the Wind"
Pat Benatar, "Love Is a Battlefield"
Cat Stevens, "Peace Train"
Alanis Morissette, "Ironie"
John Lennon, "Imagine"

Kristie Reilly



JEREMY BIGWOOD

Demonstrations in Washington on September 29.

members make. Most unions were more restrained. AFL-CIO President John Sweeney offered boilerplate support for the president and other leaders in a time of crisis. Steelworkers President Leo Gerard warned that in punishing those responsible for the attacks, "care must be taken not to repeat this most recent tragedy by harming innocent men, women and children," and he argued that besides fighting terrorism, the country should "reassert our commitment to combat the poverty and injustice that all too often provide unwitting recruits for the armies of the intolerant."

Although many in the global justice movement believe that corporate globalization, and U.S. policies in particular, contributed to conditions that have fostered terrorism in the Middle East, Robert Weissman, co-director of Essential Action, a Ralph Nader-founded corporate accountability group, argues that it is important to "make connections between corporate globalization and war in a sophisticated and nuanced way" and to "avoid conveying an opportunistic approach that anything can be converted into a corporate globalization story."

Others caution there is a danger that the public, which has been broadly supportive of the movement's goals but also overwhelmingly has backed a military response, could see the globalization movement as "anti-American," as a few

politicians and pundits have tried to argue. (In an op-ed piece in the *New York Post*, for example, Steven Schwarz outrageously claimed that "the distance between breaking the windows of McDonald's to achieve that end [of protesting corporate globalization] and blowing up the World Trade Center is pretty damned narrow.")

In any case, the movement and the public are likely to be less tolerant of the "Black Bloc's" property destruction tactics. "There's widespread recognition that the talk about 'diversity of tactics' and the actual employment of a diversity of tactics is going to have to be severely moderated in the future," says Stephen Kretzmann, an organizer of the Mobilization for Global Justice. "We're entering an area when all of our civil liberties are in greater danger. The patience of politicians, courts and the public will be much less than before."

Even if the nation's political attention will be focused on the response to terrorism, the movement against corporate globalization will not disappear. The AFL-CIO and other groups are still prepared to fight hard against granting trade promotion authority (formerly called "fast track") to Bush, just as congressional Republicans are cynically trying to push the controversial measure as a response to the terrorist attacks. Also, the AFL-CIO will urge its affiliates to

participate on November 9 in the international workplace protests organized by the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions against the WTO, which is still scheduled to meet in Qatar. Although the initiative may shift to Europe and developing countries, most leaders say the global justice movement will be able to preserve the breadth of its coalition and soon regain its strength, even if there are divisions over the response to terrorism.

"All of the same issues that motivated the movement will come back center-stage sometime early next year and earlier in other countries," says John Cavanagh, director of the Institute for Policy Studies. "The challenge for the movement is to think long term. It has been 20 years in the making and won't go away." ■

The Garden Slate

A new kind of conservative leads a Republican resurgence in New Jersey

By Dan McDonough Jr.

TRENTON, NEW JERSEY—On the surface, Bret Schundler's platform has obvious appeal to New Jersey voters. The Republican gubernatorial candidate wants to tear down the plethora of toll-booths on the state's roads. He has plans to reduce the tax burden on residents. He wants to improve the state's schools.

He's also against abortion, under any circumstances, which New Jersey is not. And he's so enthusiastic about the Second Amendment that he's said he would consider allowing citizens to carry concealed weapons.

Amazingly enough, many of the state's politically moderate voters seem willing to overlook Schundler's conservatism. In June, Schundler, then mayor of Jersey City, won the Republican gubernatorial primary—beating former Rep. Bob Franks, the moderate candidate of the party establishment, by about 14 points. Schundler became the first conservative

to win a statewide Republican primary in more than 20 years.

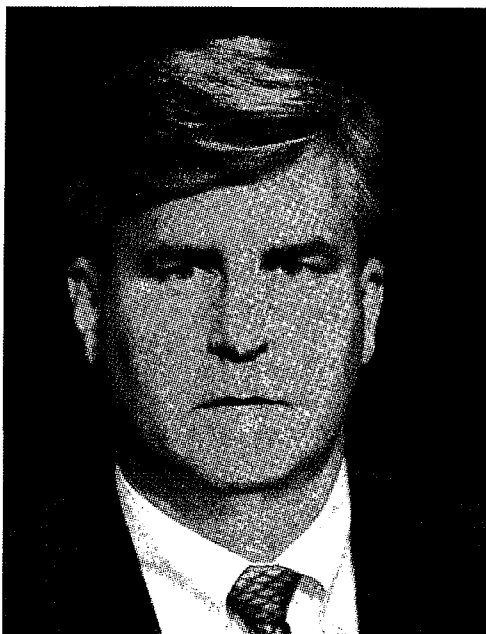
This phenomenon isn't about New Jersey voters falling to the conservative side of the political spectrum—the polls suggest otherwise. Instead, voters seem to be responding to Schundler's policy suggestions. Schundler has spent much of his time on the campaign trail addressing specific voter concerns.

For example, Schundler tells voters he will tear down the unpopular toll booths on New Jersey's Garden State Parkway within months of taking office. His opponent, Democratic incumbent James McGreevey, tells voters that the various toll-collecting authorities in the state ought to be merged. McGreevey's plan may make sense to an economist, but Schundler's resonates more with the voters.

"[Voters] believe politicians cave into opposition," Schundler says. "I point out all the political enemies I have. They say, 'Maybe this guy has a certain amount of courage.'"

Schundler's first foray into politics came in 1992, when the Democratic mayor of Jersey City ended up out of office and in prison. Though that first victory was narrow, Schundler became the first GOP mayor of the city since World War I. When he was re-elected a year later, he won with 69 percent of the vote.

Schundler's term as mayor in Jersey City was marked by successes that won him broad support among his con-



Bret Schundler: a populist Republican?

stituency. Crime dropped—following the national trend; taxes were stabilized; and the downtown economy boomed as Schundler attracted financial institutions from across the water, becoming a bedroom community for urban pioneers who then buoyed property values. Rich businesses, though, weren't the only beneficiaries of Schundler's tenure in Jersey City.

With job losses in Jersey City outpacing the level of other distressed communities—such as Newark and Camden—luring new businesses into

town became a key priority for Schundler. At the end of his term, Jersey City was recording 10 times the job growth of the state's five other largest cities combined. This gave him broad appeal in many communities, even among minorities who typically voted the Democratic line.

Schundler's success in Jersey City advocating simple concepts—such as suggesting that parents know best how to care for their children, and giving government employees more control over their health care through medical savings accounts—buoyed his brand of compassionate conservatism on the national scene. In 1999, William F. Buckley Jr. joined in the fanfare by predicting that Schundler would be a top presidential contender in 2008.

But Schundler has more immediate concerns. His initiatives for education in Jersey City have turned into a proposal for school vouchers—he'll offer tax credits to parents who send their kids to private school—and a fight against teacher tenure, which has enraged the unions. Even his popular call for the elimination of tolls on the Garden State Parkway may not be capable of closing McGreevey's double-digit lead. An early August poll by Quinnipiac University put Schundler 19 points behind McGreevey, though 17 percent of those polled remain undecided, and 44 percent said they don't know enough about Schundler to form an opinion one way or another.

But in such a socially moderate state, Schundler's position on abortion is clearly a political liability. A July poll by Quinnipiac University found that nearly half of all voters in New Jersey say abortion should be generally available, while an additional 37 percent say abortion should be available with stricter limits. Only 14 percent of the state's voters agree with Schundler that abortion should never be permitted. "Being pro-life is not politically expedient," Schundler said in a late July interview. "There obviously is no doubt about that."

The Schundler camp believes it can overcome this discord. "Bret is not running under the conservative label, per se. He is a conservative, but that's not what this campaign is about," says spokesman Bill Guhl, noting that they

Backing Out of Burma

Sara Lee, owner of Hanes, and Williams Sonoma, owner of Pottery Barn, both promised this month to pull Burmese imports off their shelves. That makes 20 companies in the last 14 months to cut off production in Burma because of human rights abuses by the ruling military regime.

The International Labor Organization has called working conditions in Burma "a modern form of slave labor." In 1997, the United States banned direct investment in Burma by American corporations but did nothing to prevent those corporations from licensing the production of their goods to factories run by the military regime. "We saw a gigantic spike in imports after the 1997 ban," says Jeremy Woodrum, director of the Washington office of the Free

Burma Coalition. The companies pulled out under pressure from activist groups such as the Free Burma Coalition, Global Exchange and the National Labor Committee.

"Doing business with a military regime is hard, a little bizarre," says Heidi Quante, coordinator of Global Exchange's Burma Project. "It's a risky, unstable environment. I think that in itself serves as a deterrent."

Major American corporations that continue to import goods from Burma include Crate and Barrel and Ames. Federated Department Stores—owner of Bloomingdale's, Macys and Burdines and the single biggest clothing dealer in America—also continues to sell Burmese products in its stores.

Lauren Courcy

haven't made abortion a driving issue in this race.

That's what distinguishes Schundler from other conservative candidates: Schundler's conservatism isn't the centerpiece of his candidacy. "He didn't go around saying, 'You should vote for me because I'm a conservative,'" Guhl says. "People aren't hung up on the conservative label. They're interested in the new ideas."

Though the last few weeks have been stressful—the campaigns virtually shut down after the attacks in New York and Washington—the dynamics of the campaign haven't changed much. McGreevey keeps trying to paint Schundler as an extremist, and his position on abortion continues to be a resounding note coming from the Democrats. Though McGreevey has a sizable lead, he still needs to put up a tough fight to prevent Schundler from making another comeback. A new poll conduct-

ed by Quinnipiac University shortly after the September 11 attacks gives McGreevey a 44 to 30 lead, five points less than he had in August. Schundler may be closing in.

With national attention—and money—coming Schundler's way, the final weeks of the campaign will be intense. Schundler's practical, no-nonsense approach to concrete issues is gaining the interest not only of conservatives, but of many other voters.

"McGreevey is flirting with that magic 50 percent mark that politicians say spells victory," Quinnipiac University polling institute director Maurice Carroll said in August.

But the election is still several weeks off, and who knows what surprises await. ■

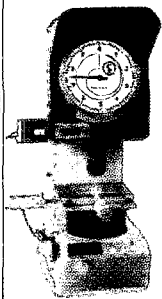
Dan McDonough Jr. is a writer in New Jersey.

Out of South Africa

Activists swap notes after U.N. racism conference

By Salim Muwakkil

On September 11, a little past 8 a.m., William Wong flew out of New York headed for his Bay Area hometown. Author of *Yellow Journalist: Dispatches from Asian America*, Wong was on the last leg of a long journey from Durban, South Africa, where he had attended the U.N. World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (WCAR). About 90 minutes into his flight, the plane was ordered to land in



Appall-o-Meter

By Dave Mulcahey

Convert 'Em All 9.4

When American Airlines Flight 77 crashed into the Pentagon, one of the leading lights of Clinton demonology, Barbara Olson, was lost. She and her husband, Solicitor General Ted Olson, are not exactly sympathetic characters, unless of course you believe in America-hating liberal conspiracies, but one couldn't help but feel grief and horror reading about their last cell-phone conversation.

Wherever she is now, Barbara might be happy to know that her colleagues are calling for a *jihad* of their own to avenge the dreadful events of September 11. Leading the pack is syndicated columnist Ann Coulter, a vicious Clintonographer in her own right, who complained bitterly in *National Review Online* that our bombs haven't yet rained down on Muslims everywhere.

"This is no time to be precious about locating the exact individuals directly involved in this particular terrorist attack," Coulter fumed. "Those responsible include anyone anywhere in the world who smiled in response to the annihilation of patriots like Barbara Olson."

"We should invade their countries, kill their leaders and convert them to Christianity."

Not Mme. Tussaud's 9.8

The news doesn't get much better in militant Muslim quarters. A Hamas student group at Al-Najah University in the West Bank town of Nablus staged an exhibit in late September marking the anniversary of "the second *intifada*." Along with pictures of the past year's carnage, the exhibit featured mock-ups of terror scenes, complete with plastic body parts, fake blood and other gruesome effects.

While the exhibit shows scenes of violence against Palestinians as well, according to a report in the *New York Times*, what really drew attention to it was a celebratory depiction of the notorious suicide attack on the Sbarro restaurant in Jerusalem. A Sbarro sign was placed over the entrance to the exhibit, and a large mural of the blast was draped over the façade of the building. Inside severed limbs hung from the ceiling, as if in flight from explosion, and gnawed pizza and other debris were scattered throughout.

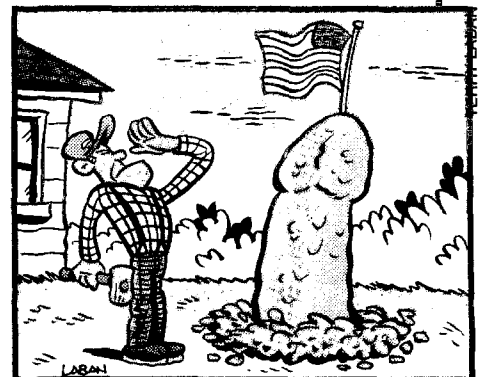
The whole tableau wasn't exactly a publicity coup for the Palestinian leadership. Although officials ordered the exhibit to be closed, it remained open, albeit a little toned down. A severed hand was removed, and some other mock gore was covered up. This disappointed some who attended.

"I would hope to see more of that," a student told the *Times*. "As Palestinian, I hope to see more Israelis killed by more Palestinians."

Standing Firm 2.4

Meanwhile, a man in Washington State has decided to show his solidarity with a nation in grief by planting two American flags in the six-foot phallus he carved out of a tree stump in his front yard.

Jean Paul Parshall has long been the bane of neighbors who find his giant organ offensive, but county sheriff's police have declined to take any action, citing the right of free expression. According to a report on Ananova.com, Parshall plans to deck his sculpture out with lights for the Christmas season and to fit it with a large condom to promote safe sex.



Indianapolis, where he learned of the hijackings that killed thousands of people in the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

Wong was stunned and sickened. "In sorting through my feelings and thoughts," he wrote in an Internet dispatch published at www.igc.org, where activists swapped notes after the conference, "I detected a connection between the U.N. conference and the tragic September 11 events that may not at first seem obvious."

The connection he found was between the grievances of Osama bin Laden, the accused mastermind of the attacks, and the gripes of many WCAR delegates, non-governmental organizations and activists. "Perhaps I have been too sheltered in recent years, too American-centric and not fully aware of broiling negative feelings toward the United States," Wong wrote.

For many who witnessed global disgust with arrogant U.S. unilateralism at the WCAR, the events of September 11 were like a ghoulish exclamation

point. "It's a tragedy that some people still feel they can solve the problems of the world through violence," says Conrad Worrill, who attended the WCAR on behalf of the National Black United Front. "But remember what Dr. King said about the United States being the world's most violent country? Remember what Malcolm said about chickens coming home to roost?"

But Worrill prefers to focus on another Malcolm X quote: "The American black man needed to recognize that he had a strong, airtight case to take the United States before the United Nations on a formal accusation of 'denial of human rights,'" Malcolm wrote in his 1965 autobiography. For Worrill and many of the black nationalist forces he represented there, the WCAR was a success if only for furthering Malcolm's vision of internationalizing the African-American struggle.

He also found victory in the conference's final declaration, which described the transatlantic slave trade as a "crime against humanity," stated

that racism has economic roots and said demands for reparations to victims of the slave trade and colonialism were valid and worthy of further examination. Worrill says various members of the "Durban 400" (the WCAR's American attendees) and others plan to push the reparations issue in a demonstration scheduled for October 14 in Washington.

There also were sounds of discord. The conference was "elitist and undemocratic," says JoNina Abron, a delegate from the Southwest Michigan Coalition Against Racism and Police Brutality. "Those who accused the Palestinians and their supporters of 'hijacking' the conference have got it all wrong," she wrote on the www.igc.org site. "From the beginning to the very end, the conference was hijacked by the United Nations bureaucrats themselves."

Abron complained that NGOs labored to craft a declaration and recommended an action plan that was summarily rejected by Mary Robinson,

U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights and head of the WCAR. Robinson objected to the use of "hateful" language accusing Israel of being an "apartheid" state and engaging in "genocide" against Palestinians. Abron wrote that the "watered-down document that was adopted did not reflect the views of the majority of NGO delegates."

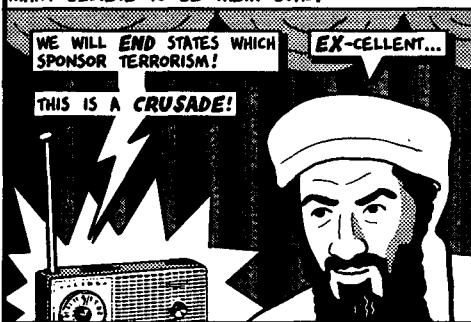
David Horne disagrees. "The WCAR cannot be adjudged a failure at any level," says Horne, a writer who teaches at California State University-Northridge. Horne lists several benefits gained from participation in the conference. Among them are global participation with several thousand others; giving voice to the harm being done to women, caste groups and victims of xenophobia; and the development of broad networks for activists and attendees.

Author Makani Themba also came away with a sense of triumph. "For me, the most important thing is that we now have a global network of like-minded folk who can strategize and respond." ■

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW

THE MEN RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS CRIMINAL ACT MUST BE BROUGHT TO JUSTICE...BUT--CALL ME A CRAZY PEACENIK--IT WOULD BE PREFERABLE TO DO SO WITHOUT GIVING THEM THE ALL-OUT HOLY WAR WHICH MANY BELIEVE TO BE THEIR GOAL.



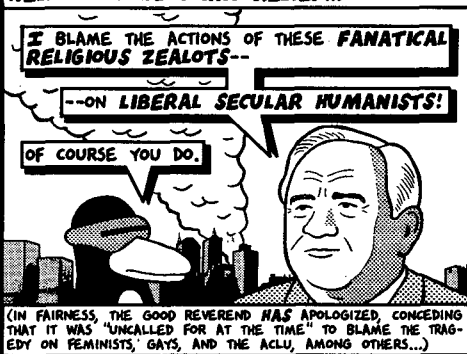
AFGHANISTAN'S TALIBAN REGIME HAS GIVEN BIN LADEN SANCTUARY, SO MAYBE YOU WANT TO BOMB KABUL BACK INTO THE STONE AGE? TOO LATE--THE SOVIETS ALREADY BEAT YOU TO IT. YOU WANT TO MAKE THE PEOPLE OF AFGHANISTAN SUFFER, DEMORALIZE THEM, TERRORIZE THEM? TOO LATE AGAIN--THE TALIBAN'S ALREADY DONE IT FOR YOU.



THERE'S A LOT OF TALK ABOUT THE NEED FOR SWIFT RETALIATION... BUT AGAINST WHOM? BIN LADEN'S ORGANIZATION CONSISTS OF PERHAPS A FEW THOUSAND MEN SCATTERED THROUGHOUT DOZENS OF COUNTRIES...IT'S LIKE BEING AT WAR WITH MENSA OR SOMETHING...



THERE ARE FEW EASY ANSWERS AHEAD...BUT, ON A LIGHTER NOTE, AT LEAST WE'VE GOT JERRY FALLWELL TO PROVIDE COMIC RELIEF...



TOM TOMORROW © 2001 ... www.thismodernworld.com

Bin Laden and the Damage Done

By Naomi Klein

What if our leaders are actually following us, instead of the other way around? What if they are scouring the overnight polls and reinventing themselves to be the kind of leaders we say we want? What if they wage war not because they have found an effective response to terrorism, but because we have told the pollsters we are growing impatient?

According to a *New York Times* poll, 58 percent of Americans support going to war "even if means many thousands of innocent civilians may be killed." Can we really live with that? I'm not only talking about morality, but about strategy: Can we sustain the potential fallout from all this "collateral damage"?

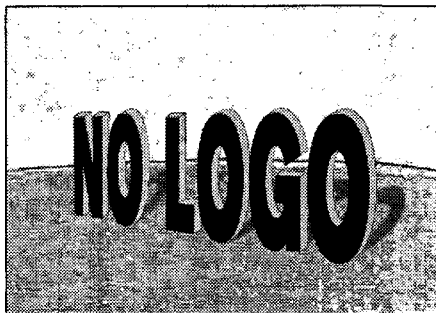
Collateral damage is the jargon used to describe the "unintended" consequences of war, the innocent civilians who die when bombs rain down. But there are many more unintended consequences of war—so many, in fact, that the CIA invented a phrase to describe what happens when short-term wartime decisions come back to haunt the people who made them: "blowback."

In the reports that have come out about Osama bin Laden's life, it is clear that he is the product of many such "unintended consequences" of war. If you have the stomach to try to understand his twisted ideology, just follow the collateral damage.

Bin Laden received his training and taste for war while fighting the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. During the Cold War, the U.S. government didn't consider his fanatical religious views antithetical to "civilization," the current rhetoric. Back then, the CIA considered them valuable weapons in the fight against communism, that other threat to "civilization." CIA funding, training and

weapons made their way to the Islamic rebels in Afghanistan. The whole plan had a certain logic to it: What better way to beat back an army of atheists than by quietly nurturing an army that believed itself driven by God's own fury?

Only now it turns out that all that money and encouragement did more



than beat the Soviets. It also created a feeling of invincibility among the rebels: If an Islamic *jihad* had defeated one superpower, why not another? Call it delayed collateral damage from the Cold War.

But this legacy alone didn't create bin Laden—more collateral damage was needed for that. Born in Saudi Arabia and a critic of his country's monarchy, bin Laden's hate was further hardened when the U.S. Army turned Saudi Arabia into its base of operations during the Gulf War. The U.S. presence became a symbol of a new imperialism for many Muslims: Here were self-proclaimed freedom fighters making alliances with an authoritarian monarchy, all on sacred Islamic soil. To the U.S. military, these armies of new enemies probably seemed inconsequential at the time, just more unfortunate collateral damage.

And what has kept bin Laden's fury at a feverish pitch all these years? He claims he is avenging yet more collateral damage: the children killed in Iraq under sanctions, the pharmaceutical factory bombed in Sudan.

Terrorists, though they often adopt the pose, are nobody's saviors, nobody's freedom fighters. They are, however, experts at manipulating real injustice for their ends. If it turns out that bin Laden is responsible for the attacks, we will have to look at him for what he is: a figure of diabolical fanaticism, yes, but also the warped and twisted progeny of all of these unintended consequences of wars past and present—a Frankenstein of collateral damage.

For terrorists, collateral damage isn't a threat, it is fuel: It creates terrorists, feeds them and sustains them. It's something to remember as we rush to leave fresh new trails of collateral damage around the world. In Afghanistan, an indiscriminate attack would create yet another country filled with desperate people who needed help to overthrow a brutal dictatorship but suffered further misery instead. In Pakistan, the U.S. presence would be taken by many as an imperial and religious slight, potentially ripping the country apart. In the Occupied Territories, Israeli forces seized the moment to step up attacks they wouldn't have attempted two weeks ago. In our own backyards, the mood of vengeance, so little informed by fact, is giving license to rampant racist attacks.

Are we ready for some more collateral damage, or should we first start facing up to the damage already done?

Many of us, myself included, have felt little but rage and sorrow since September 11. But if our leaders are really following us, we have a responsibility to no longer act on emotion alone. If our leaders are following us, we have to lead. ■

Naomi Klein, whose new column will be appearing in the magazine regularly, can be reached at www.nologo.org.



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THE LONG WAR

BUSH'S CRUSADE HAS NO END IN SIGHT

BY DOUG IRELAND

When the Joint Chiefs of Staff were looking for a name for the new war on terrorism, they baptized it "Infinite Justice." It is now clear that George W. Bush's war indeed will be infinite—the real question is to what extent the war will serve justice, abroad or at home.

Bush's speech to a joint session of Congress on September 20 followed a week in which the administration conducted a spin campaign designed to soften up the American people for the long war. And in that extraordinarily fierce and bellicose address, Bush raised the bar so high that it is apparent this war could last for years.

There was a fundamental contradiction in Bush's speech, which went largely unremarked in the unadulterated gush of praise that immediately followed it. Rolling up and eliminating the hydra-headed networks of the terrorist diaspora, the worthy goal to which Bush pledged the nation and its resources, is essentially a law enforcement problem of planetary scope. That requires an unprecedented level of international political cooperation, which in turn demands maximum political stability around the world. But Bush's decision to militarize the anti-terrorist campaign will inevitably undermine these prerequisites.

Bush called al-Qaeda—the bin Laden-created umbrella network—"the Mafia" of terrorism. But one doesn't go after the Mafia with B-1 and B-52 high-altitude bombers, or with ground troops or special forces commandos. The minute the bombs start falling, there will be civilian casualties. Muslim ones. And that will only deepen the political instability of those regimes—many of them unsavory and already plagued with Islamist fundamentalisms of virulent character and widespread popular appeal—that are precisely the governments whose cooperation is crucial to identifying, detaining and prosecuting the terrorists.

Leslie Gelb, the former *New York Times* columnist who now runs the Council on Foreign Relations, got it right when he said on PBS after the speech that it was "a declaration of war on Afghanistan and probably Iraq." And Bush's implacability in declaring he'll "make no distinction" between terrorists and the nations harboring them could soon add other countries to the list.

When Bush ran for president, he pledged never to send American armed forces abroad in any operation without an "exit strategy." In militarizing the campaign against terrorism, he doesn't have one. Eliminating the repulsive bin Laden alone will not stop terrorism. Nor will deposing the Taliban, even if Bush succeeds in doing so. Who will Bush put in their place—the fractious Northern Alliance, composed of distinctly minoritarian ethnic groups? The exiled King Mohammed Zahir Shah, who is 86 and has not set foot in the country since being overthrown in 1973? When reporters asked Bush spokesman Ari Fleischer whom we were going to fight for in Afghanistan, he pointedly refused to say (although the United

States has been meeting secretly in Switzerland with representatives of Italy—Zahir's host and sponsor—Iran, and several other countries to plot a new role for the king). There are also credible reports from inside Afghanistan that a number of local warlords and Taliban commanders are preparing to stage a coup—but military action against the country now would undercut such efforts by rallying people to the Taliban.

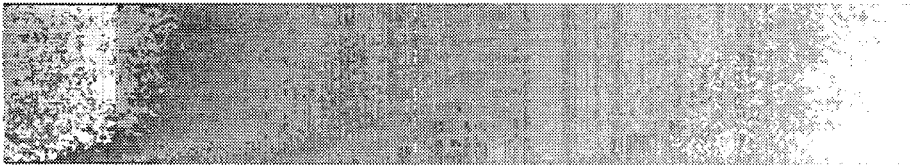
And what of Iraq? Jesse Helms told CNN that we should expect an attack on Iraq "right soon." Following this, the administration began leaking that there were no immediate plans to attack Iraq. But the stepped-up bombing of Iraq's southern air defenses in the three days preceding Bush's speech to Congress spoke louder than the latest leaks. Now the Americans and the Brits have renewed and intensified those aerial assaults. Disinformation is a weapon in this new war.

Bush is an uncultured man who knew little of the exterior world until he began running for president—and couldn't have cared less. As a result, he has committed serious verbal blunders whenever his handlers let him off the leash without a prepared text. Thus, when the historically illiterate Bush called his new war a "crusade," it conjured up for all the Muslim world the image of hordes of Knights Templar pillaging Islam a millennium ago.

Bush's speechwriters tried to compensate for this ignorant misstep by including in his speech to Congress affirmations that this is not a war against Islam. Too late, as the anti-U.S., pro-bin Laden demonstrations in a wide swath of the Islamic world—from Somalia to Indonesia—have shown. Bin Laden himself seized on this verbal cockup to score propaganda points in his letter to the al-Jazeera Arab TV network, referring to the "Jewish-Christian crusade" and to Bush as the "chief crusader."

Here at home, the revulsion felt at the terrorist attacks, as expected, has translated into a sharp lurch to the right. There was only one vote cast in the House against the resolution giving Bush full powers to militarize the anti-terrorist campaign (by Barbara Lee, the African-American Democrat from the safe Oakland, California seat formerly held by Ron Dellums). And there was not a single vote in the Senate against this new Gulf of Tonkin resolution giving Bush a blank check (contrast this with the 52 to 47 Senate vote authorizing Bush *pere's* Gulf War).

Bush, with his Wild West, "dead-or-alive" rhetoric, has surfed the wave of nationalist sentiment to unprecedented popularity—90 percent, the highest ever for a president in the Gallup poll, one point higher than his father's at the end of the Gulf War. And the Democrats in Congress have been cowed into silence: No criticism of Bush passes their lips for fear of revenge by the voters next year. The fulsome embrace between Bush and Tom Daschle after the president's speech to Congress said it all: Daschle, who now talks to Bush three



DAVID MCNEW/GETTY IMAGES

Marines at California's Camp Pendleton train for the new "war."

and four times daily, is in the president's pocket. In the House, Dick Gephardt is cutting deals in the back room with Speaker Dennis Hastert—and, while there is some grumbling among Democratic members about their exclusion from this process, it doesn't amount to much (only 54 votes against the first installment in the airline bailout, for example).

Although the economy was already in recession before the attacks—and is headed for even more serious trouble—it isn't hurting Bush. As CNN polling analyst Bill Schneider put it, "It's no longer the Bush economy, it's the bin Laden economy." The left had always hoped that when the overheated economy tanked, the downturn would provide fertile ground for a shift back to a more progressive politics; instead, it's having the opposite effect.

On the first day Wall Street reopened for business a week after the attacks on the Twin Towers, Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill went on Jim Lehrer's *NewsHour* to predict "record market highs." At week's end, of course, the stock market had recorded its biggest loss since 1933: \$1.4 trillion in America's paper wealth had gone up in smoke. Now we are being told that it's un-American to sell one's stocks. The classic slogan of consumer hucksterism, "Buy and Save," has been elevated to a moral imperative. Typical was the impassioned plea on *Larry King* by New Mexico's Pete Domenici, the GOP's chief Senate spokesman on budget matters: "If you have money put aside toward a new home, buy it! If you've set aside money for a new car, buy it! If you have money for new clothes, buy it!" [sic]—all to help "save the economy from terrorism."

Even the unions seem to be caught up in what former Labor Secretary Robert Reich derided in a *Washington Post* opinion piece as "market patriotism": In New York, for example, the union leaders who sit as trustees of the municipal employees' pension funds gave their enthusiastic approval to invest \$800 million of the workers' retirement fund in Wall Street to help it climb back from the disastrous losses—a suicidal plan hatched by Mayor Rudy Giuliani with the collusion of the city's top elected Democrats. And AFL-CIO President John Sweeney has linked arms with U.S. Chamber of Commerce head Tom Donahue in a campaign for "investment in the economy." Nationalist politics makes strange bedfellows, indeed. But, as the excellent Alan Abelson wrote in *Barron's*, "To equate buying stock with patriotism or selling stock with a lack of patriotism is balderdash, the equivalent of praising or damning a thermometer for the temperature it records."

The war frenzy is causing a revival of the most reactionary features of Republican trickle-down economics, despite the failure of Bush's economically impotent tax cut: With flag-draped rhetoric, the congressional GOP has revived the capital gains tax cut, which appears likely to garner enough Democratic votes to pass as an "economic stimulus" measure to help finance the war. A tax cut to finance the war? Bizarre.

And even though the terrorist attacks showed the utter folly of investing billions in the irrelevant, open-ended boondoggle known as Star Wars, Democratic opposition seems to be collapsing. Michigan Democrat Carl Levin, chairman of the

Senate Armed Services Committee, has already agreed to withdraw his amendment that had been the chief stumbling block to Senate approval of Star Wars (a requirement that the system could not be tested without prior congressional approval—even though such tests would violate the ABM treaty).

From campaign finance reform to the fight against AIDS, everything but the war is on hold in Congress for the foreseeable future. (The lone exception: Bush's education proposal, which he and Daschle are fashioning into a bipartisan one; score another triumph for the president—it will pass before Thanksgiving.) Bipartisan nationalism means the Democrats will have no issues to take to the country in the 2002 elections. As Democratic pollster Geoff Garin told the *Washington Post*: "For the moment, at least the electorate is on a war footing and everything else about politics flows from that fact. The voters ask themselves on every issue the fundamental question: How does it relate to defeating terrorism and making the country more secure?"

Behind the scenes in Washington, the debate that's getting the most attention is the one over the form and scope of the Office of Homeland Security, to be headed by Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Ridge. While Bush administration officials leaked to the *Wall Street Journal* that Ridge's job "can be compared to the National Security Adviser" and he'll operate "above the bureaucracy" (40 different government agencies are involved in the anti-terrorism effort), Congress will have other plans. Presidentially ambitious Sen. Joe Lieberman, the Connecticut DLCer, is preparing a bill to create a super-agency, a kind of all-powerful Ministry of the Interior on the European model, and the bureaucrats already have their box-cutters out for the bitter turf wars. The infighting and lobbying by institutional pachyderms of notorious incompetence, like the FBI, is already getting bitter. As Senator John Kerry told CNN in a laughable understatement: "There's nothing more difficult in Washington than rearranging the deck chairs."

What of our civil liberties in all this? Lieberman has already called on all Americans to become "citizen-soldiers" and, in effect, spy on their neighbors. What this means in practice in the current climate of xenophobia can be seen in the Arab-bashing by Louisiana Republican Rep. John Cooksey in his call for ethnic profiling: "When you've got a guy wearing a diaper on his head, with a fan belt around the diaper, that guy has got to be pulled over." (Just imagine the effect of this rancid racism when it is reported in the Muslim world.)

Now the Bush administration is planning to propose adoption of the Orwellian FaceInt system of "facial profiling," in which security cameras of the kind used in banks, stores and on the streets of many cities are linked by computer to digitized facial profiles of suspects which, the proponents claim, are as accurate as fingerprints. The adoption of a national ID card will sail through Congress with no difficulty—soon you won't be able to leave home without this odious *aussweiss*.

It took the Senate only 30 minutes to expand government wiretapping as well as Internet surveillance through the Carnivore system (a Big Brother legacy of the Clinton administration that allows the feds to monitor the Internet), and there's more to come. The *Wall Street Journal* predicts that the government will know "where you surf, patterns of e-mail use, what you buy," as well as what you say. The FBI has descend-

ed on college campuses across the country demanding the educational records of students—and getting them—under the "health and safety" loophole of the Family Educational Privacy Act, which was passed in the '70s after revelations of massive government spying on students. Bills are being introduced to shred that law's protections even further.

As these words are written two weeks after the attacks comes news of a small, momentary victory for liberty: The Republicans who control the House Judiciary committee had tried to force through Attorney General Ashcroft's anti-terrorism package in just 24 hours, with no hearings and no debate. But skirmishing by committee Democrats under the leadership of Michigan Rep. John Conyers succeeded in getting action postponed for a week. Conyers contends that at least six of its provisions are unconstitutional—including a provision for the preventive detention in perpetuity and without trial of noncitizen terrorist "suspects." (Hundreds of Americans, as well as foreigners, are already being held without charges, and no one seems terribly concerned about *their* rights.)

Conyers comes from a safe seat that has re-elected him for three decades and can say what he wants; this staunch civil libertarian is a walking argument against term limits. But that doesn't detract from his courage in writing a tart *Washington Post* op-ed piece quoting Benjamin Franklin's injunction—"They that can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety." To which Conyers added: "We must ensure that these acts of terror do not accomplish in a 'slow burn' what the fires of the World Trade Center and the Pentagon could not—subversively destroying the foundation of our democracy."

That kind of thinking is, sadly, distinctly in the minority among the governing classes.

Nat Hentoff warned right after the attacks of the dangers of "a new McCarthyism." There are signs Hentoff's prediction is coming true. There's a vicious organized campaign by right-wing groups to purge ABC's *Politically Incorrect* host Bill Maher from the airwaves for having the temerity to suggest that raining cruise missiles on Afghanistan was "cowardly." A raft of local stations, including ABC's Washington affiliate, have already taken his show off the air. Will the network owned by Disney—always concerned for its "family" image—have the courage to resist this hysteria?

And the Murdoch press is already in full cry against anyone who dares enter a demurrer to rampant jingoism. *New York Post* columnist John Podhoretz (a dimmer version of his indigestible parent, Norman) spewed anti-intellectual bile at Susan Sontag for a brief comment in *The New Yorker* that Congress' "unanimously applauded, self-congratulatory [pro-war] bromides" reminded her of the "Soviet Party Congress"; he also flayed *The Nation* as "the magazine that supported Stalin, Ho Chi Minh, the Sandinistas and the El Salvadoran guerrillas and the Palestinian terrorists and anyone else who made it his mission to destroy democracy and capitalism." *The New Republic's* callow editor, Peter Beinart, penned a far-fetched attack on the anti-globalization movement as the handmaiden of terrorism. You can turn on the Fox Network at almost any hour to hear more of the same.

The attempt to stifle dissent is well underway. And as the long war drags on, the worse it will get. ■

WHERE HAVE ALL THE LIBERALS GONE?

BARBARA LEE STANDS ALONE

BY ANNETTE FUENTES

When the history books are written, let the record show there was one politician with a backbone when it mattered. Rep. Barbara Lee of Oakland, California was the only member of the House or Senate on September 14 to vote against handing President George W. Bush vast authority to commence war or wars against unknown terrorists and the countries that aid them.

When the vote on Resolution 64—Authorization for Use of Military Force—was called in the House that Friday night, Lee stood tall even if she stood alone among the 421 members present. “I know this use-of-force resolution will pass,” Lee said. “There must be some of us who say, let’s step back for a moment and think through the implications of our actions today—let us more fully understand its consequences.”

Recalling the 1964 Gulf of Tonkin Resolution that opened a Pandora’s Box in Southeast Asia we still haven’t closed, Lee invoked the prescient words of Sen. Wayne Morse. One of just two senators opposing that resolution, Morse said: “I believe that history will record that we have made a grave mistake in subverting and circumventing the Constitution.”

The congresswoman, who now has a police guard because of the death threats she received after the vote, is a voice of reason and dissent when almost all other voices being broadcast—from Congress, the White House and the media—are irrational, ill-informed and incendiary. The real question is not why Lee voted against HR 64 but why she was the only one of 421 representatives and 98 senators to vote against it.

The resolution authorizes Bush “to use all necessary and appropriate force against those nations, organizations, or persons he determines planned, authorized, committed, or aided the terrorist attacks ... or harbored such organizations or persons.” Although it contains no requirement that Bush return to Congress to report on his activities, HR 64 states that nothing supercedes the War Powers Act, which requires a president to report and consult with Congress.

This deficiency bothered at least some House members, but not enough. Democrat Pete Stark, another Bay Area congressman, told the House: “I have real reservations about the resolution we are considering today. It should contain explicit language ensuring that the president reports to Congress and

consults with us in planning and executing a military response. But it does not.” Stark nonetheless voted with the herd.

Rep. Maxine Waters, another California liberal, has seldom been afraid to speak truth to power. Whither Waters on HR 64? “The congresswoman felt she had to give full resources to the president,” says spokeswoman Candace Tolliver, who adds that Waters “expects the president to come back to Congress.”

Michigan Rep. John Conyers, always a forceful counterweight to congressional conservatives, was MIA when the vote was taken on HR 64. Although he’d been in Washington earlier, Conyers was in his district and unable to get back to Washington for the vote the night of September 14, according to spokeswoman Danielle Brown. “He’s not saying how he would have voted,” Brown says.

Rep. Bernie Sanders, the independent congressman from Vermont, stated for the congressional record that “widespread and indiscriminate force could lead to more violence and more anti-Americanism.” Then Sanders voted with the rest.

Why is she all by herself?

In New York, erstwhile liberal Democrat Rep. Jerrold Nadler seemed himself transmogrified by events. Proving that Bush and his cadre of craggy advisors don’t have a monopoly on rah-rah rhetoric, Nadler declared from the House floor: “We must pass this resolution. We must wage the war that has been thrust upon us. We must do it resolutely, and we must be victorious and rid the world of this scourge of terrorism.”

Asked if Nadler was concerned by HR 64’s lack of any reporting requirement for Bush, spokesman Eric Schmeltzer replied: “He thinks Congress is not in the business of micro-managing a war. We have to give the commander-in-chief some leeway to defend the country.”

Asked if Nadler now had confidence in Bush, whose legitimate claim to the presidency is still debated, Schmeltzer said, “At times like this you have to have trust in your commander-in-chief. We can’t have another election.”

At least that much is true. But if there were another election, there is only one person with the intelligence to understand that violence is at the root of our present predicament. Barbara Lee for president. Imagine. ■



PHOTO COURTESY CONGRESSWOMAN'S OFFICE

EVERY BREATH YOU TAKE

WILL THE FEDS BE WATCHING YOU?

BY DAVID MOBERG

In all past wars, the U.S. government has restricted civil liberties of some or all citizens. Nearly always, the country later regretted those moves as ill-conceived and ineffective, from the Alien and Sedition Acts under John Adams to the Palmer raids at the end of World War I to the internment of Japanese in World War II to domestic spying and infiltration of dissident groups during the Vietnam War.

Once again, curtailment of liberties and invasion of privacy seem quite likely in the ill-defined new War on Terrorism, especially because intelligence operations will play a major role, the targets are shadowy, suspected members of the terrorist network are believed to live—often for years as “sleepers”—in the United States, and this “war” has no definable end.

A heightened public awareness of past abuses and the rhetorical commitment by a wide spectrum of politicians to safeguard civil liberties will help avoid the worst of these transgressions—like the Japanese internment. Yet after September 11, polls showed a surge in the percentage of Americans who said they were willing to trade some rights and privacy for greater security. Nevertheless, according to the *New York Times*, about 35 percent of Americans surveyed shortly after the attacks believed it would not be necessary to give up civil liberties to combat terrorism and were more worried about the government passing such restrictions than failing to enact new anti-terrorism laws. An unusually broad alliance of groups from left to right also has called on Congress to move slowly on new legislation and hold full hearings. Their skepticism is warranted. The administration is promoting a broad new Anti-Terrorism Act that contains measures that might help in the battle against terrorism along with significant, as yet unjustified, restrictions on civil liberties.

Protecting civil liberties should remain a top priority even in time of war, conventional or not. The government not only is mandated to defend those core cultural values, but a well-functioning democracy is critical, even if not always adequate, to restrain excesses of government in wartime. Yet if certain restrictions on civil liberties would seriously aid in the capture of those responsible for the September 11 attacks or the prevention of future attacks, then those restrictions could be both constitutional and popular.

“Nobody, including the ACLU, has ever argued that any right is absolute,” says ACLU President Nadine Strossen. “What we do demand, and the Constitution guarantees, is that the government does not infringe any right unless it comes up

with evidence that infringement is justified in advancing an important goal. Protecting human life and national security are of utmost importance. But what should not be accepted on the word of the attorney general is whether each particular measure is necessary or even effective to that goal.”



GABRIEL B. TAIT/KRT

John Ashcroft (left) wants to drastically increase the FBI's wiretapping authority.

With regard to most of the provisions in the proposed anti-terrorism legislation, the administration has not made a compelling case that current law enforcement powers are inadequate or that the changes would greatly improve the security of citizens. Indeed, Attorney General John Ashcroft admitted to the House Judiciary Committee: “I cannot say to you if we had enacted these [changes in the law] in August, we would have curtailed the activities in September, nor can I assure this committee that we won't have terrorist acts in the future.”

There are several fundamental problems with the Bush legislation. First, it uses an overly broad definition of terrorism, permitting even small acts of destruction of federal property—like a rock thrown through a window in the course of a demonstration—to trigger a sweeping range of anti-terrorist provisions. Second, in many cases the legislation gives law enforcement agencies new powers, with reduced judicial oversight of wiretaps and other electronic surveillance, that will extend to all criminal investigations, not just cases of terrorism. Third, changes in the law would be open-ended.

There are pragmatic, as well as principled, problems with the Bush proposals. Law enforcement agencies have not effectively used the powers they already have. The FBI, for example, is unable to manage the data that it already collects, and vast new snooping powers would simply overwhelm law

enforcement agencies with information they couldn't analyze. "The FBI is hardly a flawless agency, and there have been many instances recently of incompetence, at best," Strossen says. "That's another reason to pause at extending more powers to an agency with a history of abuse."

In some cases, the new legislation would simply expand powers already available, such as obtaining search warrants for "roving" wiretaps. Ashcroft insists that law enforcement agents must be able to tap into any telephone, Internet or other communication device used by an individual, rather than get wiretap authority for each device. But under certain circumstances, such roving wiretaps are now authorized, even though the ACLU and others question the effectiveness and the constitutionality of all types of wiretaps.

Now law enforcement agents can require telephone companies to track numbers dialed from or to a particular telephone simply by asserting that it is relevant to an ongoing investigation. Bush and Ashcroft would extend such monitoring to the Internet. But tracking e-mail and Web-surfing habits is inherently more intrusive, since standard address forms, search engine entries or Web site names all reveal more substantive information about an individual than numbers dialed on a telephone. If police want such content from telephone calls, they must get search warrants, which require more judicial scrutiny than orders to monitor numbers dialed. In addition, the bill apparently would expand the use of the FBI's Carnivore system for monitoring the Internet, which allows law enforcement agents to inspect all messages that pass through an Internet service provider, not just the messages of the person under investigation.

The administration's proposals also push into new legal areas, for example, broadly expanding the use of secret searches—in which law enforcement agents may search someone's property without notification for 90 days or more—to all criminal cases, not just serious terrorism cases. "Over time," ACLU legislative counsel Rachel King told the

BUSH'S LEGISLATION WOULD GIVE THE GOVERNMENT POWER TO SEIZE A PERSON'S ASSETS WITHOUT PROVING HE COMMITTED A CRIME.

House Judiciary Committee, "delayed notice will become the exception that swallows the rule, dealing yet another crushing blow to the Fourth Amendment."

While it would be good for law enforcement agencies across the country and across borders to cooperate more in tracking suspected terrorists, blurring the lines between military and criminal investigations, and between foreign intelligence and domestic criminal inquiries, poses serious problems. The legal standards for the military or intelligence agencies, whether for obtaining wiretaps or conducting other investigations, are much looser than for domestic crimefighters, and it would be dangerous to have those less protective standards spread to crime investigations generally. In particular, the administration wants to use wiretap information

collected in foreign countries by methods that would be illegal in the United States. This would open up the risk of secret collaboration of U.S. agencies with foreign intelligence or law enforcement bodies to circumvent domestic law.

Although tighter regulations of money laundering, including seizure of terrorist funds, would be useful, the ACLU argues that the legislation as written gives the government power to seize a person's assets without proving he committed a crime and would extend the powers to criminal cases not related to terrorism. In recent years, groups on both the left and right have complained about government abuses of its power to seize property, especially in drug-related cases.

And despite Ashcroft's professed aim of more easily detaining and removing alien terrorists, the proposed law would permit the Immigration and Naturalization Service to detain noncitizens indefinitely simply on a vague certification by the attorney general that there is "reason to believe" the person may endanger national security, even if the person is not accused of being a terrorist. Similarly, noncitizens could be deported for contributing, at any time, to a group with any link to threats against property or persons, even if that group was not designated a terrorist group in the past. Critics worry that legal contributions to anti-abortion groups or the African National Congress could be grounds for deportation under the statute.

Many of the administration's proposals seem to have been simply drawn from the longstanding wish lists of the FBI and other law enforcement agencies without a careful consideration of what might truly be needed to find and prosecute terrorists or to prevent future terrorist acts. Yet if progressive groups want to win popular support as they argue that the government should refrain from full-scale war and instead use police work to attack terrorism as an international criminal conspiracy, then they should support the most effective police strategies available while still insisting on maximum protection of civil liberties.

Indeed, parts of the Bush legislation, such as making it a crime to harbor a terrorist or expanding trade sanctions to fight terrorism, draw little opposition. Even some of the more controversial measures could be acceptable if the legislation were tightly focused on terrorism and, as the ACLU has suggested, excluded all offenses "in which the defendant did not intend to cause death or act with reckless disregard for human life." At the same time, the legislation could be written to expire within two years if not renewed by Congress, thus providing legislative review and safeguards against abuses and making clear that the law is not intended to set new precedents for all criminal investigations.

The burden of proof rests with Ashcroft and the administration to demonstrate precisely why any new powers are needed—and the greater the encroachment on civil liberties, the heavier that burden. If any freedoms are to be curtailed, it must be for the narrowly focused and limited purpose of fighting terrorism. There is no reason to let the terrorists—or law enforcement officials—compound the damage of September 11 by hijacking the Constitution as well. ■

STOPPING THE WAR

THE PEACE MOVEMENT RETURNS

BY GEOV PARRISH

It seemed impossible. Within a week of the most devastating foreign attack on the U.S. mainland in its history—a day when thousands died and virtually everyone in the country began worrying about their own physical safety and that of their loved ones—people were in the streets, demanding peace. Lots of people: thousands in New York, San Francisco, Boston, Portland and Seattle. Smaller but equally determined crowds sprang up in cities and towns across the country. By September 22—11 days after the attack—one student coalition had pulled together a day of events on 155 campuses nationwide.

Was this the peace movement? The same folks who sleepwalked through NATO's U.S.-led bombing of Yugoslavia only two years ago? Well, no. Few ventured then into the moral quagmire of an apparent U.S. attempt at "humanitarian intervention." It was a confusing issue, but more importantly, it was one ordinary people didn't have to care about.

Everyone, however, cared about September 11—and had an opinion about what the government should do. At first, the dominant sense—the only sense, to hear our TV networks—was to go kick some A-rab ass. But within days, more and more people started asking significant questions about the effectiveness of George Bush's proposed War on Terrorism. Questions like: How can the war be fought? *Who* is the enemy? *Where* is the enemy? How can we achieve victory? How will we know when we've achieved it? Is this the best way to prevent future terrorism? Will we create more terrorists than we eliminate?

Those are not simply pacifist questions; they're common-sense questions that transcend ideology, and so the crowds have grown from the pacifist and progressive core, through faith-based communities and into the mainstream.

A COALITION OF ACTIVIST AND RELIGIOUS GROUPS—including American Friends Service Committee, Fellowship of Reconciliation, Peace Action, Pax Christi, War Resisters League, Shundahai Network, Global Exchange, Black Radical Congress, the Institute for Policy Studies and many others—is calling for local anti-war actions on October 7. For information on past and upcoming anti-war events around the country, try www.peacefuljustice.cjb.net or www.warresisters.org.



STACY WALSH ROSENSTOCK

New York City, September 21

An international Gallup poll released on September 21 showed overwhelming public opposition in 29 of 31 countries to a U.S. military response. Majorities of up to 80 to 90 percent in Europe and Latin America favored extradition and trial of those responsible, not armed force. The only countries where military response was favored were Israel (77 percent) and the United States—with only 54 percent. A week after unimaginable loss of civilian life, nearly half of the American public had serious doubts about our proposed war.

Very little of this appeared in national media until the White House and Pentagon finally acknowledged some of the same concerns. As a result, Americans have now been cautioned not to expect a massive land invasion. That comes as an enormous relief to the new anti-war movement, which has been motivated in large part by fears that what Bush and

his circle of hawks had been proposing would not only be ineffective, but could rapidly become World War III.

The new movement's challenge is to call for the United States and its allies to pursue a reasoned, effective strategy, without its demands sounding like apologies for terrorism. That will require tact, clarity and understanding. It requires saying not just what activists want to say, but what that 46 percent, and others, need to hear. It requires not just a litany of past U.S. foreign policy sins, but explaining how non-military options can stop terrorism better: improved security without stripping civil liberties; improved policing and intelligence without abusive covert programs; and attacking the motivations of young, poor, devout, desperate terrorists—in other words, challenging policies by which the West promotes poverty, dictatorships and violence in the Islamic world.

September 11 impacted American life in so many ways that the activist temptation is to incorporate everyone's pet issues, because they're all affected. But this movement needs focus and coordination for the many people who spontaneously came out into the streets so quickly. All agree that the War on Terrorism won't go away soon. That gives anti-war activists time to organize, and to insist that terrorism be prevented more effectively—without war. The sooner military deployments end, the better our future. The race is on. ■

BAD EXAMPLE

BUSH IS DRAWING THE WRONG LESSONS FROM ISRAEL'S RESPONSE TO TERROR

BY NEVE GORDON

Do you get it now?" asked *New York Times* reporter Clyde Haberman on the day after the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, suggesting that Americans ought now to understand Israel's violence against Palestinians. The next day, *Times* columnist Thomas Friedman wrote from Jerusalem that since they "hate our existence, not just our policies" we have "to fight the terrorists as if there were no rules." The terrorists are "world-class evil," Friedman explained, reinforcing the dangerous, Manichean framework that President Bush introduced immediately after returning from his hiding place in Nebraska.

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon did not waste a minute. Realizing that international attention would be focused on the horrific attacks, he gave the Israeli military the green light to invade Jenin, Jericho and Ramallah. Accompanied by infantry, tanks rolled into the cities, while Apache helicopters flew overhead; within three days, 19 Palestinians were killed—including two children—and scores were injured.

These recent Israeli actions—not unlike the assassinations, economic strangulation and the occupation itself—are con-

doned because they are perpetrated against terrorism. The end, according to the twisted logic advanced by both the Israeli government and eminent *Times* writers, justifies the employment of brutal violence. In their view, terrorism is not determined by the nature of the act, but rather by the actor's identity. Israel's assassinations and bombings are, apropos this distorted logic, radically different from the actions carried out by Palestinian militia.

The *Times* articles not only condone Israeli crimes against Palestinians, they replicate the military discourse that has managed to colonize the mainstream media in the United States since the devastating attacks. This discourse, which reflects and reinforces the new *modus operandi* of the Bush administration, is all too familiar to most Israelis. The fact that Sharon's actions have undermined democracy and produced more bloodshed has not deterred the United States from following the Israeli lead. Even before the bodies have been counted and the dead buried, undemocratic practices have begun to manifest themselves in America.

The decision to allow the detention of suspects for an indefinite period, alongside the move toward lifting restric-

COLLATERAL FAMINE

BY TERRY J. ALLEN

Even if no bombs are dropped on Afghanistan and no bullets fired at Osama bin Laden or the Taliban, millions of Afghans may die in what U.N. agencies warn will be a humanitarian crisis of "stunning proportions."

Afghanistan, already shredded by decades of war and years of Taliban rule, is suffering a major natural disaster in the form of severe drought and famine. Some 3.8 million Afghans were already dependent on food aid from the international agencies that withdrew after the September 11 attacks. Without new shipments, 320,000 Afghans will run out of food within a week; by December 1, 6 million people will exhaust their food supply, says U.N. World Food Program spokesman Khaled Adly.

When the harsh winter descends, 7.5 million very poor Afghans will face starvation and lethal cold, according to the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance. The most vulnerable will die as surely as if they had been ripped apart by bombs. No wonder Afghans are fleeing in droves toward neighboring countries. Most will be turned back at the border and join millions of internally displaced persons, many condemned to squalid, overcrowded refugee camps.

Afghanistan's neighbors acted quickly to seal borders. They feared an overwhelming human flow that would flood already strained economies and contribute to political unrest. Since 1979, the 3 to 4 million Afghans in Pakistan, Iran and other nations have constituted the world's largest single refugee group.

The United States was no more eager than Pakistan to see a new wave of refugees. One of the 18 demands that the Washington reportedly made on Pakistan was to seal its border with Afghanistan to prevent bin Laden militants from escaping. The United States also demanded a halt to fuel exports on which Afghanistan relies for military and civilian transportation and, in much of the severely deforested nation, for heat.

Afghans trapped in miserable border refugee camps, which aid agencies are attempting to supply, may be the lucky ones. Afghanistan is at the bottom in the world for infant, child and maternal mortality rates, literacy and life expectancy rates, and levels of per capita food availability. The United Nations puts life expectancy at 43.

Last July, Taliban leader Mullah Mohammed Omar called the drought God's punishment for the people's discontent with Taliban rule and neglect of their religious duties. The current drought and famine are so bad that "some Afghans, especially in the central parts of the country, have reportedly eaten poisonous grass that caused paralysis and many displaced people in the northern provinces have been eating meals of locusts mixed with animal fodder," reports the U.N. World Food Program.

While the United States has not blamed the Afghan people for the plague of Taliban rule, the effect of Washington's actions may be to sentence millions of them to death for the policies of their leaders. ■

tions imposed on the FBI and CIA, exemplifies how the emphasis on military solutions is already paving the way for an assault on civil liberties. But civil liberties are not the only rights at stake; economic and social rights are also in danger of being undermined as powerful corporations manipulate the situation to advance their avaricious objectives.

Who will benefit from the \$40 billion anti-terrorism and recovery package—to be taken from the “sacrosanct” Social Security surplus—which lawmakers approved, without blinking, three days following the attack? This sum is, of course, in addition to the some \$325 billion that the bloated military apparatus already gobbles up each year. Not unlike the Israeli government—which recently passed its 2002 budget, slashing all social spending while dramatically increasing the money allocated to infrastructure and military—the U.S. Congress is now expected to circumscribe spending on health care, education and other social services, so as to confer billions on the military or, more precisely, on corporations like Lockheed Martin and Raytheon. In a week in which the Dow Jones posted a 14.3 percent loss, its largest since the Depression, Lockheed Martin and Raytheon gained 10 percent and 37 percent, respectively.

The military discourse, however, is not only used to corral financial and political backing for the privileged few; it is also employed as a concealing mechanism. It is not coincidental that most commentators and political analysts discuss terrorism as if it were caused by an internal disposition that compels the actor toward violence. The widespread reiteration of the term “pure evil” is just one striking example. This view

represses the fact that terrorism is generated by social wrongs, historical grievances and structural exploitation. To paraphrase Simone de Beauvoir, people are not born but become terrorists.

Once a structural critique is adopted, it becomes clear that terrorism, and more importantly the grassroots support it needs to thrive, frequently arises from social injustices. The powers that be do not appreciate this kind of critique, for it suggests not only that the military cannot deal a death blow to terrorism, but that they are implicated in its creation. Accordingly, they treat terrorism’s symptoms as if they were the root causes, while the actual causes are conveniently ignored. This is surely apparent in the Israeli case, whereby the government reacts to Palestinian resistance as if the occupation did not exist.

The United States is also culpable. It has carried out, financed and supported terrorist acts in the past; it has upheld neoliberal economic policies with devastating effects on billions of people around the globe; and it has undermined the establishment of international institutions that would hear grievances and potentially offer nonviolent alternatives. The United States has also weakened the United Nations by its periodic unilateralism.

Not unlike Sharon, Bush has decided to wreak more havoc by crying war. He could have adopted a long-term vision, offering suggestions on ways to curb and perhaps even eliminate the social forces that engender terrorism. But that seems too much to ask from this administration. ■

Neve Gordon teaches politics at Ben-Gurion University and can be reached at ngordon@bgumail.bgu.ac.il.

WHAT GOES AROUND ...

AN INTERVIEW WITH CHALMERS JOHNSON

BY JEFF SHAW

Chalmers Johnson saw the September 11 catastrophe coming. A renowned Asia specialist and founder of the Japan Policy Research Institute, Johnson is the author of more than a dozen books about world politics. His 2000 book, *Blowback: The Costs and Consequences of American Empire*, argued that U.S. interventionist foreign policy and military overextension would lead to unintended and unpredictable consequences. A year later, his warning seems eerily prescient.

Johnson spoke with In These Times on September 13.

Is what happened on September 11 an example of blowback?

Of course it is. That’s exactly what my book was written for: It was a warning to my fellow Americans, a year ago, that our foreign policy was going to produce something like this. It’s important to stress, contrary to what people in Washington and the media are saying, that this was not an attack on the United States: This was an attack on American foreign policy. It was an example of the strategies of the weak against the overwhelmingly powerful.

Osama bin Laden has been named the primary suspect in these attacks. In the first chapter of *Blowback*, you talk about earlier American attacks on Osama bin Laden as an example of “a spiral of destructive behavior.”

I heard Sen. John McCain say this morning that the people of Afghanistan have nothing to worry about if they would just turn over Osama bin Laden and cooperate with us. ... Where was he during the ’80s, when we and the Soviet Union were destroying Afghanistan? Our efforts were to hire people like bin Laden to come from Saudi Arabia and help give the Soviet Union a Vietnam-like experience.

Don’t get me wrong. Everyone understands that the people of New York, the people of Washington, the people on the airplanes were innocent bystanders—and that is the nature of this kind of warfare. Our Department of Defense invented the phrase “collateral damage” to deal with the dead Iraqis and the dead Serbs as a result of our bombings of their countries. ... I know it sounds cruel to say, but the people of New York were collateral damage of American foreign policy. It was inevitable that something like this would come back.

You implied that this type of terrorist warfare seems to be the warfare of the future. I assume that you would expect to see more?

No nation can hope to beat the United States on American terms. Therefore you must devise a strategy that essentially makes our overwhelming military capability worthless. I think they have managed to do so.

People in Washington are continually talking about declaring war—but declaring war on whom? They don't know. If they are going to go out and attack Afghanistan, it will simply produce a further cycle of blowback and retaliation. In the meantime, it will also even further inflame the entire Middle East.

If not military force, what could be effective against this type of terrorist warfare?

What we need to find out is, what are we doing that is provoking this? Is there any flexibility in our policy? Couldn't we alter our policies somewhat? Couldn't we make it our business to try to stay out of fratricidal and hate-laden conflicts? And then, to the extent that we are still the victim of terrorism—which we always will be—then we need a much greater analytic effort to defend ourselves against that. And that would not be impossible to do.

Clearly, what happened on September 11 was an almost catastrophic failure of intelligence by extremely expensive agencies that do not do anything. And so far, the American reaction seems to be to target the Bill of Rights more than anything else. Retaliation is not the answer. It hasn't worked for Israel, it has only exacerbated the situation. It won't work for us.

Is it possible that blowback may take place internally as well as externally?

The greatest danger we have now is militarism in America. We have this huge, overpowering, unbelievably expensive military establishment. It is something from the days of Washington's farewell address to Eisenhower's invention of the phrase "military-industrial complex" that seasoned U.S. leaders have warned against—the threat of a huge military establishment to the liberty of our citizens.

I fear that from this we are going to get even more militarism. That is, more and more functions—including domestic police functions—will be transferred from civilian institutions to the military, and the military will have ever greater authority in our society. We know how that will end. We're talking here about imperial overstretch, and the weaknesses of the imperial structure that will ultimately lead to a collapse.

Often in times of crisis, there are opportunities. Might this be an opportunity for the American public to look itself in the mirror?

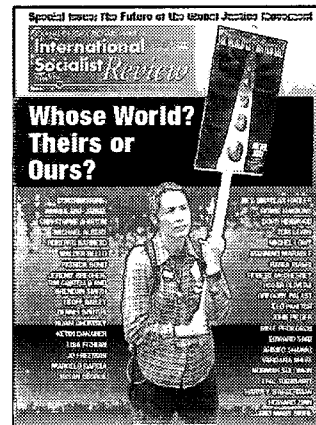
It is possible that we could have a genuine popular reaction. I'm not totally pessimistic. It is perfectly possible we will have a demand from the public that foreign policy becomes important again. If this attack is an attack on our foreign policy, as I believe it is, we should be looking much harder at what our foreign policy is. If the United States is now going to go out and bomb some innocent people in Afghanistan who have already gone through two decades of living hell—most of it sponsored by our government and that of the other erstwhile superpower, the former Soviet Union. Then you must say, we deserve what we're going to get. ■

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PEACE IS INDIVISIBLE

AN INTERVIEW WITH STUDS TERKEL

BY RICHARD STEELE

The following edited transcript is excerpted from an interview with Studs Terkel recorded for 848; a radio show on Chicago's WBEZ.

Over the years, we've heard scores of Studs Terkel's conversations gathering the thoughts and experiences of others. But this time, we wanted to hear Studs' own reactions and analysis of the tragic events of September 11.

My first reaction was horror, horror—the tragedy, of course. Naturally, this has been well-covered by the press, the TV and radio. But my first reaction was one of: It happened. The United States is no longer an impregnable fortress that it always thought it was.

How do you feel about comparisons made between what happened and the World War II bombing of Pearl Harbor?

You can't compare that act with World War II. Einstein, the man I'd love to quote right now—I love to quote Albert Einstein because no one dares contradict me—Albert Einstein was *Time* magazine's cover boy as the "man of the century." Einstein, the man who split the atom, said, "The whole world since the atom's been split, since Hiroshima, the whole world has changed irrevocably—except for one thing: The way we think."

We still think in those old terms of wars, of boundaries, of us as the righteous ones. When we bomb people, it's for the good of the world and for the good of themselves. And he said unless we think anew, peace is indivisible. What happens in Guatemala or in the Middle East affects us. It hasn't really affected us as persons. Shortly after the bombings, we were on the 55th floor of Bank One [in Chicago]. My son had to see a lawyer. And we were practically the only ones on the floor. And all I saw were these long corridors, empty—it was out of a Bergman film, surreal. And down below, all the people, all crowded, all jamming, all going home. They just wanted to go home. As though they were refugees. We see refugees. It has no effect on us. We're used to them, there—the distant country, but not us. And now the lesson to be learned is that peace is indivisible.

One of the things that Bush has said, I'm paraphrasing now, "It's very black or white. There is a good guy and a bad guy. We've got to get the bad guys." Do you think that's a simplification?

I think it's horrendously simplistic. The bad guys, that's the point: the good and the bad guys—who are the bad guys? I pick up the papers and unanimous letters to the editor: "Let's go. It's war. Let's go. Pearl Harbor."

Who are the bad guys? They are obviously nutty, loony, vile individuals. Massive retaliation, is that it? Should we bomb Iraq (as we've been doing, by the way)? Who do we bomb? Do we bomb the Afghans? They were our allies, by the way. They were our heroes during the Cold War. ... Who do we bomb? Who do we hit? Are we so hungry to hit somebody rather than face the situation? What caused the situation to enable these madmen to do what they did?

What do you think a 20-year-old today might think about this compared to how you felt as a young man when America was engaged in World War II?

That's what I mean by having a national Alzheimer's disease. The young need to be told about what led to World War II to begin with, the war that had to be fought against fascism, of course, and I was patriotic and I was stateside—limited service for a year—but many of my colleagues and friends were in it. That had to be fought. To compare World War II with now makes no sense, because the world has been altered considerably since. We were the only country in the world that was not affected by the war, and until this moment we never thought about being invaded.

So how will this series of tragic incidents affect the American spirit?

I think the American spirit is strong. It has always been there. The American spirit I think is as rich and vital as ever. We're facing a certain challenging moment as though it were a test for us, a test of our intelligence as well as our, may I use the word, humanity. And that we should recognize as a nation of humans that not everything our government does is right. When we go to war it's us, we got to go. "My country right or wrong" is not right. There is an old saying: "My country right or wrong, but if it's wrong, let's set it right." And that's what Americanism is really all about. ■

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TRANSITION



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Metaphors of Terror

By George Lakoff

As a metaphor analyst, I want to begin with the power of images. The images we see and recall interact with our system of metaphors. The results can be powerful.

There are a number of metaphors for buildings. A common visual metaphor is Buildings Are Heads, where windows and doors are openings in the head like eyes, nose and mouth. For many people this metaphor interacted with the image of the plane going into the South Tower of the World Trade Center, producing via visual metaphor the unconscious but powerful image of a bullet going through someone's head, the flame pouring from the other side, blood spurting out.

Tall buildings can, via visual metaphor, be people standing erect. For many the falling of the towers activated this metaphor. Each tower falling was a body falling. We are not consciously aware of the metaphorical images, but they are part of the power and the horror we experience when we see them.

Each of us, in the prefrontal cortex of our brains, has what are called "mirror neurons." Such neurons fire either when we perform an action or when we see the same action performed by someone else. There are connections from that part of the brain to the emotional centers.

Such neural circuits are believed to be the basis of empathy. This works literally—when we see the plane coming toward the building and imagine people in the building, we feel the plane coming toward us; when we see the building toppling toward others, we feel the building toppling toward us. It also works metaphorically: If we see the plane going through the building, and we unconsciously metaphorize the building as a head with the plane going through its temple, then we sense—unconsciously but powerfully—being shot through the temple. If we metaphorize the building as a person and see the building fall to the ground in pieces, then we sense—again unconsciously but powerfully—that we are falling to the ground in pieces. Our systems of metaphorical thought, inter-

acting with our mirror neuron systems, turn external literal horrors into felt metaphorical horrors.

Here are some other cases:

- **Control Is Up:** You have control over the situation; you're on top of things. This has always been an important basis of towers as symbols of power. In this case, the toppling of the towers meant loss of control, loss of power.
- **Phallic imagery:** Towers are symbols of phallic power and their collapse reinforces the idea of loss of power. But another kind of phallic imagery was more central here: the planes as penetrating the towers with plumes of heat. The pentagon, a vaginal image from the air, penetrated by the plane as missile.
- **A Society Is A Building:** A society can have a "foundation" which may or may not be "solid" and it can "crumble" and "fall." The World Trade Center was symbolic of society. When it crumbled and fell, the threat was more than to a building.
- **We think metaphorically of things that perpetuate over time as "standing."** Bush the Father in the Gulf War kept saying, "This will not stand," meaning that the situation would not be perpetuated over time. The World Trade Center was built to last 10,000 years. When it crumbled, it metaphorically raised the question of whether American power and American society would last.
- **Building As Temple:** Here we had the destruction of the temple of capitalist commerce, which lies at the heart of our society.

Our minds play tricks on us. The image of the Manhattan skyline is now unbalanced. We are used to seeing it with the towers there. Our mind imposes our old image of the towers, and the sight of them gone gives one the illusion of imbalance, as if Manhattan were sinking. Given the symbolism of Manhattan as standing for the promise of America, it appears metaphorically as if that promise were sinking.

Then there is the persistent image, day after day, of the charred and smoking remains: It is an image of hell.

The World Trade Center was a potent symbol, tied into our understanding of our country and ourselves in a myriad of ways. All of what we know is physically embodied in our brains. To incorporate the new knowledge requires a physical change in the synapses of our brains, a physical reshaping of our neural system. The physical violence was not only in New York and Washington. Physical changes—violent ones—have been made to the brains of all Americans.

The Bush administration's framings and reframings and its search for metaphors should be noted. The initial framing was as a "crime" with "victims" and "perpetrators" to be "brought to justice" and "punished." The crime frame entails law, courts, lawyers, trials, sentencing, appeals and so on. It was hours before "crime" changed to "war" with "casualties," "enemies," "military action," "war powers" and so on.

This situation does not fit our understanding of a "war." There are "enemies" and "casualties" all right, but no enemy army, no regiments, no tanks, no ships, no air force, no battlefields, no strategic targets and no clear "victory." The war frame just doesn't fit. Colin Powell had always argued that no troops should be committed without specific objectives, a clear and achievable definition of victory, a clear exit strategy—and no open-ended commitments. But he has pointed out that none of these is present in this "war."

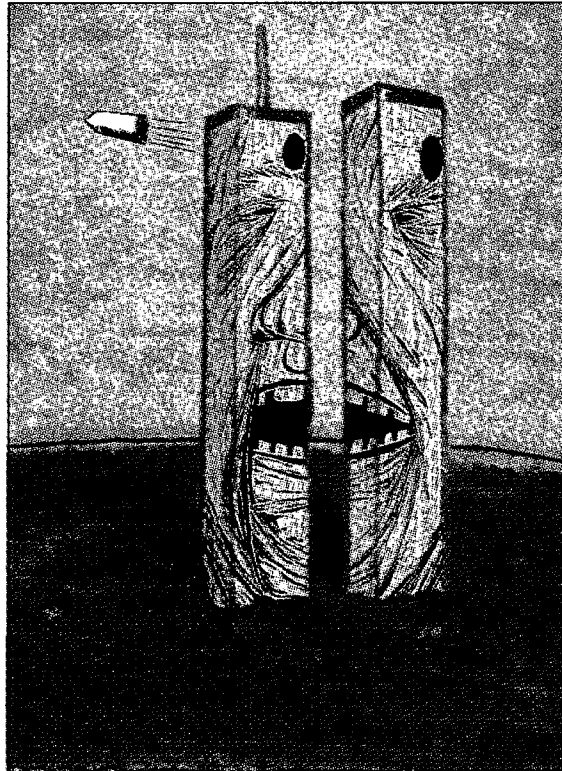
Because the concept of "war" doesn't fit, there is a frantic search for metaphors. First, Bush called the terrorists "cowards"—but this didn't seem to work too well for martyrs who willingly sacrificed their lives for their moral and religious ideals. More recently he has spoken of "smoking them out of their holes" as if they were rodents, and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld has spoken of "drying up the swamp they live in" as if they were snakes or lowly swamp creatures. The conceptual metaphors here are Moral Is Up; Immoral Is Down (they are lowly) and Immoral People Are Animals (that live close to the ground).

The use of the word "evil" in the administration's discourse works in the

following way. In conservative, "Strict Father" morality, evil is a palpable thing, a force in the world. To stand up to evil you have to be morally strong. If you're weak, you let evil triumph, so that weakness is a form of evil in itself, as is promoting weakness. Evil is inherent, an essential trait, that determines how you will act in the world. Evil people do evil things. No further explanation is necessary. There can be no social causes of evil, no religious rationale for evil, no reasons or arguments for evil. The enemy of evil is good. If our enemy is evil, we are inherently good. Good is our essential nature and what we do in the battle against evil is good. Good and evil are locked in a battle, which is conceptualized metaphorically as a physical fight in which the stronger wins. Only superior strength can defeat evil, and only a show of strength can keep evil at bay. Not to show overwhelming strength is immoral, since it will induce evildoers to perform more evil deeds because they'll think they can get away with it. To oppose a show of superior strength is therefore immoral. Nothing is more important than the battle of good against evil, and if some innocent non-combatants get in the way and get hurt, it is a shame, but it is to be expected and nothing can be done about it. Indeed, performing lesser evils in the name of good is justified—"lesser" evils like curtailing individual liberties, sanctioning political assassinations, overthrowing governments, torture, hiring criminals and "collateral damage."

Then there is the basic security metaphor, Security As Containment—keeping the evildoers out. Secure our borders, keep them and their weapons out of our airports, have marshals on the planes. Most security experts say that there is no sure way to keep terrorists out or to deny them the use of some weapon or other; a determined, well-financed terrorist organization can penetrate any security system. Or they can choose other targets, say, oil tankers.

Yet the Security As Containment metaphor is powerful. It is what lies behind the missile shield proposal. Rationality might say that the September 11 attack showed the missile shield is pointless. But it strengthened the use of the Security As Containment metaphor. As soon as you say "national security," the Security As Containment metaphor will be activated and with it, the missile shield.



The reaction of the Bush administration is just what you would expect a conservative reaction to be—pure Strict Father morality: The world is a dangerous place. There is evil loose in the world. We must show our strength and wipe it out. Retribution and vengeance are called for. If there are "casualties" or "collateral damage," so be it.

The reaction from liberals and progressives has been far different: Justice is called for, not vengeance. Understanding and restraint are what is needed. The model for our actions should be the rescue workers and doctors—the healers—not the bombers. We should not be like them, we should not take innocent lives in bringing the perpetrators to justice. Massive bombing

of Afghanistan—with the killing of innocents—will show that we are no better than they. But it has been the administration's conservative message that has dominated the media. The event has been framed in their terms. As Newt Gingrich put it on the Fox Network, "Retribution is justice."

We must reframe the discussion. I was reminded recently of Gandhi's words: Be the change you want. The words apply to governments as well as to individuals.

There are (at least) three kinds of causes of radical Islamic terrorism: 1) worldview, or religious rationale; 2) social and political conditions, or cultures of despair; 3) means, or the enabling conditions.

The Bush administration has discussed only the third: the means that enable attacks to be carried out. These include leadership (e.g., bin Laden), host countries, training facilities and bases, financial backing, cell organization, information networks and so on. These do not include the first and second causes on the list.

The question that keeps being asked in the media is, "Why do they hate us so much?" It is important at the outset to separate moderate to liberal Islam from radical Islamic fundamentalists, who do not represent most Muslims. Radical Islamic fundamentalists hate our culture. They have a worldview that is incompatible with the way that Americans—and other Westerners—live their lives. One part of this worldview concerns women, who are seen as "pearls," objects of value and beauty to be hidden from all men but their husbands. They are to hide their bodies, they have no right to property, no right to travel on their own. Western sexuality, mores, music and women's equality all violate their values, and the worldwide ubiquity of American cultural products, like movies and music, offends them.

A second part concerns theocracy. Radical Islamists believe that governments should be run according to strict Islamic law by clerics. A third concerns holy sites, like those in Jerusalem, which

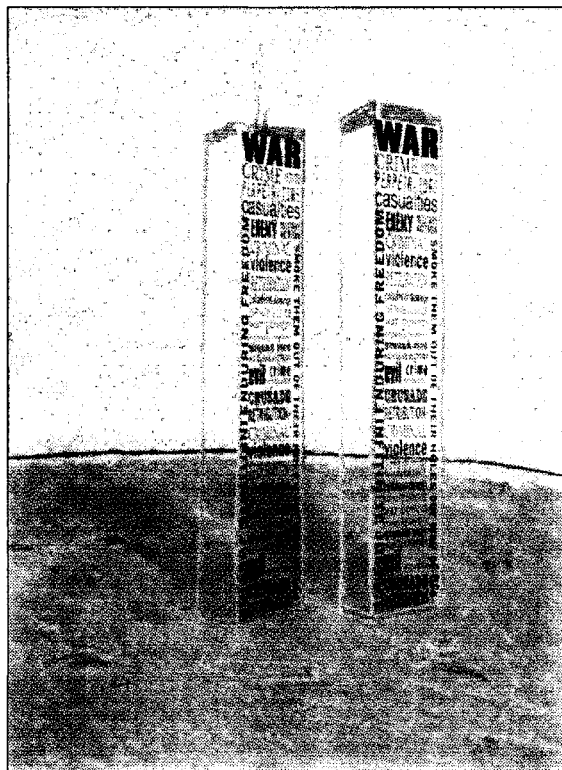
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they believe should be under Islamic political and military control. A fourth concerns the commercial and military incursions by Westerners on Islamic soil, which they liken to the invasion of the hated crusaders. The way they see it, our culture spits in the face of theirs. A fifth concerns *jihad*—holy war to protect and defend the faith. A sixth is the idea of a martyr, a man willing to sacrifice himself for the cause. His reward is eternal glory—an eternity in heaven surrounded by willing young virgins. In some cases, there is a promise that his family will be taken care of by the community.

Most Islamic would-be martyrs not only share these beliefs but have grown up in a culture of despair that leaves people vulnerable to the idea of martyrdom: They have little to lose. Eliminate the conditions of despair and you eliminate much of the breeding ground for terrorists. When the Bush administration speaks of eliminating terror, it does not appear to be talking about remedying cultures of despair and the social conditions that lead one to want to give up one's life to martyrdom. Country by country, the conditions (both material and political) leading to despair need to be addressed, with a worldwide commitment to ending them. It should be done because it is a necessary part of addressing the causes of terrorism—and because it is right. The anti-terrorist coalition being formed should be made into a long-term global institution for this purpose.

That would address the second cause. But what about the first—the radical Islamic worldview itself? Military action won't change it. Social action won't change it. Worldviews live in the minds of people. How can one change those minds—and if not present minds, then future minds? The West cannot! Those minds can only be changed by moderate and liberal Muslims—clerics, teachers, elders, respected community members. There is no shortage of them. It is vital that they form a unified voice against hate and, with it, terror. Remember that

“taliban” means “students.” Those who teach hate in Islamic schools must be replaced—and we in the West cannot replace them. This can only be done by an organized, moderate, nonviolent Islam. The West may be able to help in some ways, but alone we are powerless to carry it out. We depend on the goodwill—as well as the courage and effectiveness—of moderate Islamic lead-



ers. To gain it, we must show our goodwill by beginning in a serious way to address the social and political conditions that lead to despair.

But a conservative American government, thinking of the enemy as evil, will not take the primary causes seriously. They will only go after the enabling causes. But unless the primary causes are addressed, terrorists will continue to be spawned.

Rep. Barbara Lee (D-California), who I am proud to acknowledge as my representative in Congress, said the following in casting the lone vote against giving President Bush full congressional approval for carrying out his War on Terrorism as he sees fit:

I am convinced that military action will not prevent further acts of international terrorism against the United States. This is a very complex and complicated matter. ... However difficult this vote may be, some of us must urge the use of restraint. Our country is in a state of mourning. Some of us must say, let us step back for a moment. Let us just pause for a minute and think through the implications of our actions today so that this does not spiral out of control.

I have agonized over this vote, but I came to grips with it today and I came to grips with opposing this resolution during the very painful yet very beautiful memorial service. As a member of the clergy so eloquently said, “As we act, let us not become the evil that we deplore.”

I agree. But what is striking to me as a linguist is the use of negatives in the statement: “not prevent,” “restraint” (inherently negative), “not spiral out of control,” “not become the evil that we deplore.” Friends are circulating a petition calling for “justice without vengeance.” “Without” has another implicit negative. It is not that these negative statements are wrong. But what is needed is a positive form of discourse.

There is one.

The central concept is that of “responsibility,” which is at the heart of progressive or liberal morality. Such morality begins with empathy, the ability to understand others and feel what they feel. That is presupposed in responsibility—for oneself, for protection, for the care of those who need care, and for the community. Those were the values that we saw at work among the rescue workers in New York right after the attack.

Responsibility requires competence and effectiveness. If you are to deal responsibly with terrorism, you must deal effectively with all its causes: religious, social and enabling causes. Responsibility requires care in the place of blundering, overwhelming force. Bombing innocent civilians and harming them by destroying their country's domestic infrastructure will be counterproductive—as well as immoral. Failure to address the religious

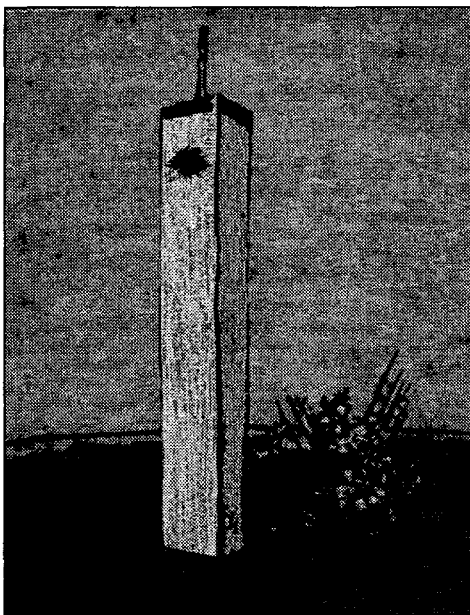
and social causes would also be irresponsible. The responsible response begins with joint international action to address all three: the social and political conditions, the religious worldview and the means with all due care.

I have been working on a monograph on foreign policy. The idea behind it is this: There are many advocacy groups that have long been doing important good works in the international arena, but on issues that have not officially been seen as being a proper part of foreign policy: the environment, human rights, women's rights, the condition of children, labor, international public health issues (e.g., AIDS in Africa), sustainable development, refugees, international education and so on.

The metaphors that foreign policy experts have used to define foreign policy rule out these important concerns. Those metaphors involve self-interest (e.g., the Rational Actor Model), stability (a physics metaphor), industrialization (unindustrialized nations are "underdeveloped") and trade (freedom is free trade). An alternative way of thinking about foreign policy would consider all these issues a natural part of what foreign policy is about. The premise is that, when international relations work smoothly, it is because certain moral norms of the international community are being followed.

These moral norms come out of what I call "nurturant morality." It is a view of ethical behavior that centers on empathy and responsibility (for both yourself and others needing your help). Many things follow from these central principles: fairness, minimal violence (e.g., justice without vengeance), an ethic of care, protection of those needing it, a recognition of interdependence, cooperation for the common good, the building of community, mutual respect and so on. When applied to foreign policy, nurturant moral norms would lead the American government to uphold the ABM treaty, sign the Kyoto accords, engage in a form of globalization governed by an ethics of care—and it would automatically make all the concerns listed above part of our foreign policy.

This, of course, implies multilateralism, interdependence and international cooperation. But these three principles, without nurturant norms, can equally well apply to the Bush administration's continuation of its foreign policy. Bush's foreign policy, as he announced in his election campaign, has been one of self-interest ("what's in the best interest of the United States")—if not outright hegemony. The Democratic leaders incorrectly criticized Bush for being isolationist and unilateralist on issues like the Kyoto accords and the ABM Treaty.



He was just following his stated policy of self-interest. Indeed, the mistake of Bush's critics has been to use "multilateralism" versus "unilateralism" as a way to categorize foreign policy. Self-interest crosses those categories. When it is in America's interest (as he sees it), he will work with other nations. His War on Terrorism will therefore change his image to that of an internationalist.

There is, interestingly, an apparent overlap between the nurturant norms policy and an idealistic vision of the Bush administration's new war. The overlap is, simply, that it is a moral norm to refuse to engage in, or support, terrorism. From this perspective, it looks like the left and the right are united. It is an illusion. In nurturant norms policy, anti-terrorism arises from another moral norm: Violence against innocent parties

is immoral. But Bush's new war will certainly not follow that moral norm. Bush's military advisers appear to be planning massive bombings and infrastructure destruction that will certainly take the lives of a great many innocent civilians.

The idealistic claim of the Bush administration is they intend to wipe out "all terrorism." What is not mentioned is that the United States has systematically promoted a terrorism of its own and has trained terrorists, from the contras to the *mujahedin* to the Honduran death squads to the Indonesian military. Indeed, there are reports that two of the terrorists taking part in the attacks were trained by the United States. Will the U.S. government stop training terrorists? Of course not. It will deny that it does so. Is this duplicity? Not in terms of conservative morality and its view of good versus evil and lesser evils.

If the administration's discourse offends us, we have a moral obligation to change public discourse. Be the change you want.

If the United States wants terror to end, the United States must end its own contribution to terror. And we must also end terror sponsored not against the West but against others. We have made a deal with Pakistan to help in Afghanistan. Is it part of the deal that Pakistan renounce its own support of terrorism in Kashmir against India? I would be shocked if it were. The Bush foreign policy of self-interest does not require it.

The question must be asked. If that is not part of the deal, then our government has violated its own stated ideals; it is hypocritical. If the terrorism we don't mind—or might even like—is perpetuated, terrorism will not end and will eventually turn back on us, just as our support for the *mujahedin* did. The foreign policy of moral norms is the only sane foreign policy.

We must be the change we want! ■

George Lakoff is professor of linguistics at the University of California at Berkeley and a senior fellow at the Rockridge Institute. He is the author of *Moral Politics*, a study of how conservatives and liberals see the world.

The Desert of the Real

By Slavoj Žižek

Christopher Isherwood, an Englishman who became an American, once gave expression to the unreality of American daily life, exemplified in the motel room: "American motels are unreal! ... They are deliberately designed to be unreal. ... The Europeans hate us because we've retired to live inside our advertisements, like hermits going into caves to contemplate."

The Wachowski brothers' 1999 hit film *The Matrix* brought this logic to its extreme climax: The material reality we all experience and see around us is a virtual one, generated and coordinated by a gigantic mega-computer to which we are all attached. When the hero, played by Keanu Reeves, awakens into the "real reality," he sees a desolate landscape littered with burned ruins—what remained of Chicago after a global war. The resistance leader Morpheus utters the ironic greeting: "Welcome to the desert of the real."

Was it not something of a similar order that took place in New York on September 11? As we were introduced to the "desert of the real," the landscape and the shots we saw of the collapsing towers could only remind us of the most breathtaking scenes from innumerable Hollywood disaster movies. The unthinkable had been the object of fantasy. In a way, *America got what it fantasized about*, and this was the greatest surprise.

It is precisely now, when we are dealing with the raw reality of a catastrophe, that we should bear in mind the ideological and fantasmatic coordinates that determine its perception. If there is any symbolism in the collapse of the World Trade Center, it is not that the Twin Towers stood for capitalism per se, but of *virtual* capitalism, of financial speculations disconnected from the sphere of material production. The towers symbolized, ultimately, the stark separation between the digitized First World and the Third World's "desert of the real."

The American sphere of safety is now experienced by its citizens as being under threat from an Outside of terrorist attackers who are ruthlessly self-sacrificing and cowards, cunningly intelligent and primitive barbarians. Whenever we encounter such a purely



evil Outside, we should gather the courage to remember the Hegelian lesson: In this evil Outside, we should recognize the distilled version of our own essence. For the past five centuries, the (relative) prosperity and peace of the "civilized" West was bought by the export of ruthless violence and destruction to the "savage" Outside. It's a long story, from the conquest of America to the slaughter in Congo.

Cruel and indifferent as it may sound, we should also, now more than ever, bear in mind that the actual effect of these attacks is much more symbolic: In

Africa, every single day more people die of AIDS than all the victims of the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, and their deaths can and could have been easily minimized with relatively small financial means. The United States got a taste of what goes on around the world on a daily basis, from Sarajevo to Grozny, from Rwanda and Congo to Sierra Leone. If one adds to the situation in New York rape gangs and a dozen or so snipers blindly targeting people who walk along the streets, one gets an idea of what Sarajevo was like a decade ago.

Now, we are forced to strike back, to deal with real enemies in the real world ... but whom to strike? Whatever the response, it will never hit the right target, bringing us full satisfaction. The spectacle of America attacking Afghanistan would be just that: If the greatest power in the world were to destroy one of the poorest countries, where peasants barely survive on barren hills, would this not be the ultimate case of the impotent acting out? Afghanistan is *already* reduced to rubble, destroyed by continuous war during the past two decades. The impending attack brings to mind the anecdote about the madman who searches for his lost key beneath a street light; asked why he searches there, when he actually lost the key in a dark corner, he answers: "But it is easier to search under strong light!" Is it not the ultimate irony that Kabul already looks like downtown Manhattan?

To succumb to the urge to retaliate now means precisely to *avoid* confronting the true dimensions of what occurred on September 11—it means an act whose true aim is to lull us into the secure conviction that nothing has *really* changed. The true long-term threats are further acts of mass terror in comparison to which the memory of the World Trade Center collapse will pale—acts less spectacular, but much more horrifying. What about biological warfare, the use of lethal gas or the prospect of DNA terrorism—the development of poisons that will affect only people who share a determinate genome? Instead of a quick acting

out, one should confront these difficult questions: What will "war" mean in the 21st century? Who will be "them"?

There is a partial truth in the notion of a "clash of civilizations" attested here. Witness the surprise of the average American: "How is it possible that these people display and practice such a disregard for their own lives?" Is the obverse of this surprise not the rather sad fact that we, in the First World countries, find it more and more difficult even to imagine a public or universal cause for which one would be ready to sacrifice one's life?

But a brief look at the comparative history of Islam and Christianity tells us that the "human rights record" (to use an anachronistic term) of Islam is much better than that of Christianity: In past centuries, Islam was significantly more tolerant toward other religions than Christianity. It was through the Arabs that, in the Middle Ages, Western Europeans regained access to the ancient Greek legacy. We are not dealing with a feature inscribed into Islam as such, but with the outcome of modern socio-political conditions. This notion of the "clash of civilizations" has to be thoroughly rejected: What we are witnessing today are rather clashes *within* each civilization.

Indeed, every feature attributed to the Outside is already present in the very heart of the United States. Murderous fanaticism? What about the rightist, populist "fundamentalists" who also practice a terror of their own, legitimized by (their understanding of) Christianity? Since America is in a way "harboring" them, should the U.S. Army have punished its own country after the Oklahoma City bombing? And what about the way Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson reacted to the attacks on September 11, perceiving them as a sign that God had lifted his protection because of the sinful lives of Americans, putting the blame on hedonist materialism, liberalism and rampant sexuality, and claiming that America got what it deserved?

It is still too early to tell how the events of September 11 will be symbolized or what acts they will be evoked to justify. Even now, in these moments of utmost tension, this link is not automatic but

contingent. We already see the first bad omens, like the sudden resurrection, in the public discourse, of the old Cold War term "free world": The struggle is now the one between the "free world" and the forces of darkness and terror. The question to be asked here is: Who then belongs to the *unfree* world? Are, say, China or Egypt part of this free world?

The day after the attacks, I got a message from a journal that was just about to publish a longer text of mine on Lenin, telling me that they decided to postpone its publication—they considered it inopportune to publish a text on Lenin immediately after the terrorist attacks. Does this point toward ominous ideological rearticulations to come, with a new *Berufsverbot* (prohibition to

"Nothing will be the same after September 11." Really? Or is it just that America was forced to realize the kind of world it is part of?

employ radicals) much stronger and more widespread than the one in the Germany of the '70s?

These days, one often hears the phrase that the struggle is now the one for democracy—true, but not quite in the way this phrase is usually meant. Already, some leftist friends of mine have written me that, in these difficult moments, we had better keep our heads down and not push forward with our agenda. Against this temptation to duck out the crisis, one should insist that now the left should provide a better analysis. To not do so is to concede in advance the left's political and ethical defeat in the face of acts of quite genuine heroism on the part of ordinary people—like the passengers who, in a model of rational ethical action, apparently overtook the hijackers and provoked the early crash of the fourth plane over Pennsylvania.

So what about the phrase that reverberates everywhere, "Nothing will be the same after September 11"? Significantly, this phrase is never further elaborated—it's just an empty gesture of saying something "deep" without really knowing what we want to say. So our reaction to this phrase should be: Really? Or is it rather that the only thing effectively changed was that America was forced to realize the kind of world it is part of?

Such changes in perception are never without consequences, since the way we perceive our situation determines the way we act in it. Recall the processes of collapse of a political regime—say, the collapse of the Communist regimes in Eastern Europe. At a certain moment, people all of a sudden became aware that the game was over, that the Communists had lost. The break was purely symbolic, nothing changed "in reality"—and, nonetheless, from that moment on, the final collapse of the regime was just a question of days.

What if something of the same order *did* occur on September 11? We don't yet know what consequences in economy, ideology, politics and war this event will have, but one thing is sure: The United States, which, until now, perceived itself as an island exempted from this kind of violence, witnessing these kind of things only from the safe distance of a TV screen, is now directly involved.

So the question is: Will Americans decide to further fortify their sphere, or risk stepping out of it? America has two choices. It can persist in or even amplify its deeply immoral attitude of "Why should this happen to us? Things like this don't happen *here*," leading to even more aggression toward the Outside—just like a paranoiac acting out. Or America can finally risk stepping through the fantasmatic screen separating it from the Outside world, accepting its arrival into the desert of the real—and thus make the long-overdue move from "A thing like this should not happen *here*" to "A thing like this should not happen *anywhere*!"

Therein resides the true lesson of the attacks: The only way to ensure that it will not happen here again is to prevent it from going on *anywhere else*. America should learn to humbly accept its own vulnerability as part of this

world, enacting the punishment of those responsible as a sad duty, not as an exhilarating retaliation. Even though America's peace was bought by the catastrophes going on elsewhere, the predominant point of view remains that of an innocent gaze confronting unspeakable evil that struck from the Outside. One needs to gather the courage to recognize that the seed of evil is within us too.

In his campaign for the presidency, George W. Bush named Jesus Christ as

the most important person in his life. Now he has a unique chance to prove that he meant it seriously. For him, as for all Americans today, "Love thy neighbor" means "Love the Muslims." Or it means nothing at all. ■

Slavoj Žižek, a philosopher and psychoanalyst, is a senior researcher at the Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities, in Essen, Germany. He is the author of, among other books, The Fragile Absolute and Did Somebody Say Totalitarianism?

but a self-fulfilling prophecy), so why waste time and money on international news when you've got Gary Condit right here at home?

Thus the networks have, over the years, shut down foreign bureaus, cut back coverage and exasperated many decent journalists who feel it's madness for Americans to be so willfully ignorant about everything except the Madonna tour. The shutting down of foreign bureaus has also reinforced ethnocentrism and institutional racism at the networks—sure, you'd still have a bureau in London, but why have one in Africa? Stories about foreign affairs, and especially stories about the consequences of U.S. policy, have been deemed unprofitable and irrelevant.

As a result, how many Americans know about the deadly consequences of U.S. economic sanctions that have been in place against Iraq since August 1990? How frequently have the net-

works told viewers that medicines and materials for water purification are included in these sanctions? Various international agencies estimate that more than 1 million people have died as a result of the sanctions, more than 600,000 of them children. The leading cause of death of children under five in Iraq is dehydration caused by diarrhea, with malnutrition and pneumonia running closely behind.

But the networks have looked the other way, allowing Americans to bask in the myth that we are a good and decent people led by a good and decent government. Coverage of the Palestinian-Israeli crisis has been equally superficial. Most

Americans know that the United States "supports" Israel. Do they also know that bombs and missiles that kill Palestinians are often U.S.-made? It is utterly forbidden in the newly patriotic, flag-labeled news media to even

Oedipus in Manhattan

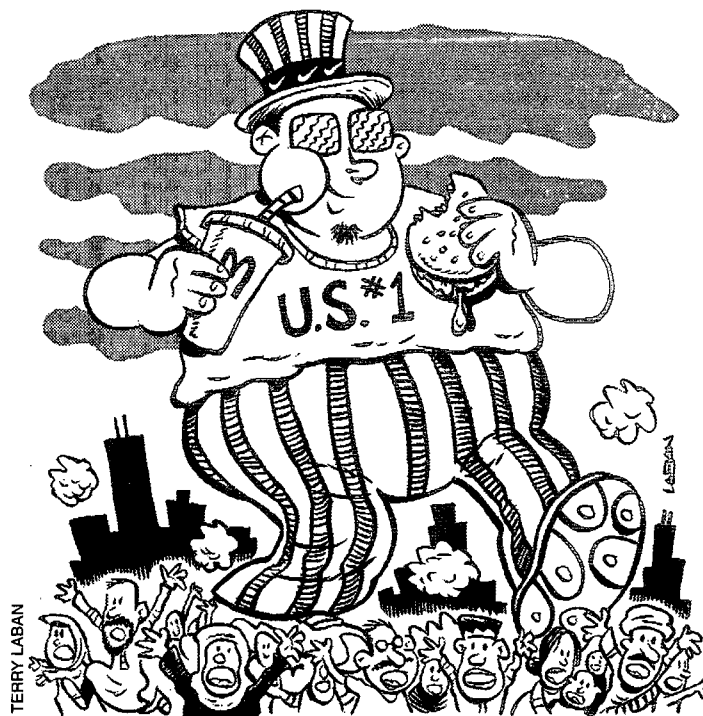
By Susan J. Douglas

Lucky for me, I have smart friends. As several of us were mourning and trying to make sense of the catastrophe of September 11 on the following Sunday, Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, the feminist historian, said, "It's really like a Greek tragedy, isn't it?"

We had been talking about aspects of the disaster rarely, if ever, mentioned on the news channels: the role of American hubris, Americans' ignorance of why we are so hated in other parts of the world, and the media's role in perpetuating that blindness about our government's often brutal actions and their tragic repercussions. So Carroll thought of Sophocles and, in the process, offered a powerful framework, barely whispered elsewhere, for thinking about how our blindered media have in turn helped blind the country. But unlike Oedipus, who gouged his own eyes out in self-punishment for his crimes, our dimness, inflicted by the media, may be the source, not the result, of tragic consequences.

Left-liberal critics have been warning for years about the threats to democracy posed by media mergers that concentrate the control over television, movies and print media into fewer and fewer conservative hands. In addition to severely

delimiting the range of political discourse on television (try to find the progressive equivalent of *The McLaughlin Group*,



Meet the Press or Fox News) they emphasize entertainment that they hope will garner ratings, quality fare like *Temptation Island* and *Survivor*. The assumption is that many Americans are not interested in foreign affairs (which is true enough,

explore how U.S. policy may have gotten us to this tragic pass in the road.

Journalists could actually be quite clear here: Nothing justifies these horrific attacks, but we ignore anti-American hatred at our peril. Of course, as we hear the phrase "wake-up call" *ad nauseum*, we would like to think this catastrophe might be a wake-up call to the news media, too, reminding them of the importance of coverage—and not just from government sources—of international affairs in this era of globalization. One would like to think that as a global power we can no longer sit here, admiring our reflections in the mirror, while actions done in our name immiserate millions.

But I have bad news. Two days after the attacks, when the media gaze was naturally elsewhere, the FCC, under Colin Powell's son Michael, took advantage of the cover provided and initiated proceedings to further solidify oligopoly control of the media. (For those of you who haven't been following Michael Powell, he intends to do everything in his power to shred the few pathetic remains of media regulation.) First, the FCC (under Rupert Murdoch's directive) is seeking to eliminate the rule that prohibits an entity from owning a daily newspaper and a broadcast outlet in the same market. In asking for comments on the proposed changes, the FCC suggested that the Internet provides new diversity, so why not let someone own both a paper and a TV station in the same town? It wondered, disingenuously, whether "the rule continues to be necessary to protect a diversity of viewpoints."

The very same day, the FCC announced that it would also review previously established limits on the vertical and horizontal integration of cable companies and the limits on how many subscribers a cable operator can serve. Now I ask you, what kind of a sleazy, craven opportunist chooses this moment, with the entire nation in shock and grief, to slip through the initial stages of two huge corporate giveaways?

With the help of the FCC, the media conglomerates have forced their news divisions to make large profits, which in turn has prompted bureau closings, staff cuts, the virtual elimination of documentaries and investigative

reporting, and verbal food-fights passing for political discourse. Murdoch, who brings us right-wing propaganda under the guise of reporting on Fox News, may soon be able to bring us even more helpful commentary such as this offered by Bill O'Reilly about Afghanistan: "The Afghans are responsible for the Taliban. We should not target civilians. But if they don't rise up against this criminal government, they starve, period."

This is typical of what now passes for analysis of Middle East affairs. Recommended homework assignment for O'Reilly: Watch the courageous documentary *Beyond the Veil* reported by Saira Shah and aired on CNN, which gruesomely documents what happens to people who defy the Taliban. For several years feminists have circulated information and petitions about the inhumane repression of women under the Taliban. But who cared? They were only poor Muslim women. *Beyond the Veil* has only aired twice, once at 11 p.m. on a Saturday night, when it should be pre-empting everything from *The Weakest Link* to *Entertainment Tonight*. This documentary does, of course, support in many ways the administration's attacks on the Taliban. But it also shows the enormous devastation already suffered by the civilian population and is a powerful argument against the "bomb them back to rubble" and "collateral damage" talk so favored by O'Reilly and friends.

But let's return to the FCC's speculation about the Internet now relieving the government's obligation to preserve diversity in media "markets." On the Net are accounts of anti-war demonstrations around the country, anti-war

petitions, media criticism pieces by left-liberal writers, and pleas for moderation and understanding from relatives of the victims, Afghani-Americans and international journalists. We hear none of these voices on television, see no coverage of the demonstrations, no evidence at all that there are millions of us, despite what the polls say, opposed to air strikes, the killing of civilians, the perpetuation of the cycle of violence.

We move between the cyber-world of peace and reconciliation, and the TV world of war and vengeance. The Internet gives us a way to communicate with each other that we didn't have before, but it also allows our hopes and fears to be marginalized, stuck in a realm where we all talk to each other, reiterating calls and responses within our own Greek chorus.

So here is our nation blinded, like Oedipus, reassured by our media that hubris has no consequences, completely unable to see that character is fate. It has been, at times, a crucial part of our national character to have a free, active and critical press. When that is suppressed, it may shape our relations with the rest of the world in deeply destructive ways. In a sane world, the news media would do all it could in this time of ignorance, hatred and insecurity to help the scales fall away from our eyes. But my friend Carroll is right. The mainstream media are simply driving the stakes further into our eyes. ■

Susan J. Douglas is a professor of communications studies at the University of Michigan and the author of *Listening In: Radio and the American Imagination*.

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This Mess We're In

By Joshua Klein

What happens when an event of such colossal calamity and perfidy supercedes everything else in the culture? When the World Trade Center was attacked and destroyed Tuesday, September 11, the event immediately proved one of the few in modern history to unify the disparate populace under a collective cloak of gloom and emotion. Impossible to ignore, the events of that day colored everything around us, from our daily work habits to our hobbies. Suddenly, entertainment seemed like such an insignificant luxury, something to rekindle only long after the mourning was done.

If the destruction of the World Trade Center is indeed some kind of turning point for America, then we can expect the meaning we apply to music to change as well. Following the disaster, various cultural events around Chicago were canceled or postponed, either out of respect or simply logistics. But other artists went forward with their plans, perhaps foolishly or bravely but certainly surrounded by an air of curiosity. How would the national mood flavor what would typically be a time for celebration? How can a single singer affect the mood of a crowd, desperate for a reason to smile? And what would the context of malaise and depression do for the songs themselves?

The night of the terrorist attack, Laurie Anderson performed to a still dazed audience. She opened by dedicating the set to "everybody that died," her sole mention of what had happened. But Anderson's music documents the disorder and confusion of the modern world, and few might have predicted the power her music attained. Though the set drew from two decades of her work, it could have just as easily been composed that morning. Full of oblique references to death and overt references to angels, the ghostly music fit the mood all too well, especially when Anderson intoned the chilling "O Superman": "Here come the planes. They're American planes. Made in America. Smoking or non-smoking? And the voice said: Neither snow nor rain nor gloom of night shall stay these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds. 'Cause when love is gone, there's always justice. And when justice is gone, there's always force."

Polly Jean Harvey, who had intended to fly back to England to accept a prestigious music award, opened her set that Thursday night with an impromptu speech. She noted that she and her band had debated whether to play, but she ultimately decided

that "we need you, and you need us." She then proceeded to play "This Mess We're In," a song ostensibly about a relationship gone wrong that was transformed into a haunting eulogy. "Can you hear them? / The helicopters? / I'm in New York. / No need for words now. / We sit in silence. / I think it's Wednesday, the evening. / This mess we're in."

"Big Exit" packed an equally powerful double meaning: "I walk on concrete / I walk on sand / But I can't find / A safe place to stand / I'm scared baby / I wanna run / The world's crazy / Gimme a gun." For the audience that night those lyrics will never be the same again.

On Monday Lucinda Williams played, but the singer seemed notably subdued. By then the country had begun to move on, or at least appeared to be doing so, but that sense of dread lingered. Television replayed the images into a numbing blur, and commentators, politicians and citizens alike continued to express a frightening bloodlust that seemed to stem as much from shock as from honest desire for vengeance. Williams, dazed, appeared to be grappling with these dual instincts, one of pacifist restraint and one of angry retribution.

"We've been playing a song that says everything I've been feeling," she said at the end of her set, before launching into Bob Dylan's 1963 "Masters of War." That song remains one of Dylan's bitterest and bloodiest but also one of his most complex. Most of "Masters of War" is a tirade against warmongers and supporters of violence. It points the finger at those who would send others into battle for them and then profit from the carnage. But

as the song reaches its conclusion, it shatters the thin ceiling of restraint. Just as Dylan wrote it, Williams couldn't hold the rage in any longer: "And I hope that you die / And your death'll come soon / I will follow your casket / In the pale afternoon / And I'll watch while you're lowered / Down to your deathbed / And I'll stand o'er your grave / 'Til I'm sure that you're dead."

Like the songs sung in the wake of the tragedy, events seem to be spinning out of our control. How can we sit still and silent when to wait would be to invite more pain and suffering? How can we fight back when such an exercise seems unlikely to stop those few individuals who would do us harm? Our culture and morality are shifting under us even as we speak and sing, and the musicians and artists that once helped us make sense of the world seem as lost and frustrated as we are. ■



**Our culture and morality
are shifting under us even
as we speak and sing.**